

2019 | The White Ravens

A Selection of International Children's and Youth Literature



Internationale Jugendbibliothek

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Stiftung
Internationale Jugendbibliothek

IMPRESSUM

The White Ravens 2019

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PREFACE

With great pleasure we present to you the 2019 edition of our annual catalogue »The White Ravens«. This year's cover is teeming with a flock of curious, book-loving birds in blue, yellow, and white. The feathered friends, both big and small, are eagerly pecking at pages on the search for their favourite book. Diego Bianki, the creator of this picture, is also the illustrator of the book »Cuentos cansados«, which was selected for the »White Ravens 2018« list.

The »White Ravens« catalogue is the most important annual publication of the International Youth Library. It aims to promote quality in children's book publishing and has become an increasingly useful tool for anyone interested in looking beyond national borders. This year, the »White Ravens« contain a selection of 200 notable children's and young adult books from 58 countries published in 37 languages.

The printed catalogue is published prior to the Frankfurt Book Fair. For decades now, all recommended books are put on display in hard copy at the International Youth Library's booth at the

Bologna Children's Book Fair. This tradition allows booth visitors to peruse the books at leisure, leafing through their pages and exploring them.

In addition to being featured in the printed catalogue, the reviews, bibliographical data, and book covers are also available in the »White Ravens« database on our website www.ijb.de.

The Library receives a vast number of donation copies and review copies over the course of every year. It falls to our language and children's book specialists to set aside new publications that catch their attention and strike them as noteworthy and that 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 approaches 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 inter-

national children's and young adult literature: They read new publications in the original languages, visit 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 have a profound knowledge of 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 thus presents a unique selection of 200 books that cover a highly diverse range of voices. Its international nature results from the efforts of approximately twenty 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 creators, receive the international attention they deserve. We hope that our work contributes to this goal.

Dr. Christiane Raabe
Director of the International Youth Library
September 2019

1



'Abdallāh, Ḥasan (Abdullah, Hasan) (text)
 Mirhiġ, Linā (Merhej, Lena) (illus.)
Lā tal'ab ma'a 'd-dīki!
 (Laa ta-laab maa al-deek!)
 (Don't play with the rooster!)
 Bairūt (Beirut): Dār as-Sāqī (Al Saqi), 2018. – 24 p.
 ISBN 978-614-03-2026-0

Rooster | Voice | Imitation | Play | Picture book

A rooster is quite dumbfounded when his »Cock-a-doodle-doo!« is parroted by a child. When he flaps his wings, the boy waggles his arms. When he stretches his talons up high, the boy sticks his foot in the air! So the game goes on, until the proud bird alights himself on a washing line and shows the cheeky imitator his natural limits. In the end, the fun competition resolves peaceably. Lively, brightly-hued gouache pictures depict the antagonists with expressive mimicry and pose-like gestures, as in a comic. Alternating whole-page illustrations and small-format panels make the story even more dynamic. Lebanese author Hasan Abdullah has published poetry volumes for adults as well as more than 50 children's and young adult books. Lena Merhej specializes in film animation, book illustration, and comics. She has published more than 30 books and has received several awards. (Age: 6+)

2



Muḥaidalī, Nabiha (Mheidly, Nabiha) (text)
 Ṭāhir, Walīd (Taher, Walid) (illus.)
Al Kateb
 (al- Kātib)
 (The writer)
 Bairūt (Beirut): Dār al-Ḥadā'iq (Al Hadaek),
 2018. – 33 p.
 ISBN 978-614-439-119-8

Writer | Literature | Storytelling | Imagination | Cat | Picture book

This book is about writing and an author's love for his characters – characters that he must let go when his work is finished. The plot follows a writer as he strenuously searches for an appropriate protagonist for a new story, until he finally lands on a unique-looking cat. The shaggy, plain, but self-confident and brave animal becomes the hero of a tale full of adventure. When the writer later leafs through his work, the cat prances out and bids him a final adieu with the words: »You surely don't want me to stay stuck between the book covers«. This original, cleverly-told book has witty and dynamic coloured-chalk illustrations. Lebanese author Nabiha Mheidly studied biology, publicity, and pedagogy and has directed Al Hadaek, the publishing house she founded, since 1989. Egyptian illustrator, cartoonist, author, and painter Walid Taher is among the Who's Who of Arabic children's literature. (Age: 8+)



3

Kamāl, al-Batūl (Kamal, Al Batool) (text)
Zainī, 'Alī az- (Elziny, Aly) (illus.)

'Alā ra'sihi riš'a

(Alaa raa-si-hi riy-sha)

(A feather on his head)

Ġidda (Jeddah): Kādī wa-Ramādī (Kadi & Ramadi), 2018. – 30 p.

ISBN 978-603-90973-8-9

Rivalry | Envy | Creativity | Self-confidence |
Individuality | Difference | Diversity | Picture book

This picture book shows how humans fundamentally resemble each other, yet remain unique. One half of the inhabitants of a village wears a feather on their heads and believe they are better than everyone else for it. But then the previously non-feathered also start growing a feather on their heads thanks to the pills that Mr. Plan sells for 5 riyals. Scandalous! To combat the »false feathers«, the first group buys adhesive tape from Ms. Idea for 10 riyals, which they use to remove the feathers off the rivals' heads. Then, for 15 riyals Mr. Plan offers a mysterious, ineffective drink as a countermeasure. The conflict escalates, until Ms. Idea explains to the village community that what's special about humans is found inside their heads, and it makes no difference whether one wears a feather or not. Finally, peace is restored. This fairy-tale story of Saudi Arabian author Al Batool Kamal is accompanied by humorous, lively pictures by Egyptian illustrator Aly Elziny. (Age: 8+)



4

Qanawātī, Rāmā (Kanawati, Rama) (text)
Fāḍil, Fādī (Fadel, Fadi) (illus.)

Atarā?!

(Aa tara?!)

(You see?!)

aš-Šāriqaṭ (Sharjah): Kalimat, 2018. – 24 p.

ISBN 978-9948-41-973-0

War | Night | Fear | Consolation | Picture book

Teddy bear in arm and pursued by a spooky giant, a little boy gets out of bed and heads into the street in the middle of the night. War is raging in the city, loud thunder can be heard, explosions pierce the sky with flashes that light up the darkness. The threatening atmosphere only abates on the final page, where the teddy bear, stitched back together again after having been damaged, embodies the hope that the wounds of war will heal over time. This message is echoed in the book's endpaper, where lines are cast across the page like rough seams. The mixed technique of the expressive pictures as well as the stuffed-doll protagonists fit very well with the story. By representing spaces in a highly distorted manner, an especially dark and claustrophobic atmosphere is created. Rama Kanawati is from Syria and lives in Qatar, working as a screenplay and children's book author. Fadi Fadel, also Syrian, is a painter, illustrator, and cartoonist who works in Sharjah (UAE). (Age: 8+)

5



Sala i Vila, Carles (text)
Arenzana, Estela de (illus.)
El tren de les parades sense nom
(*The train of the nameless stations*)
Barcelona: La Galera, 2018. – 140 p.
ISBN 978-84-246-6243-1

Train | Trip | Train station | Fantasy fiction

Lia is not happy that her parents have sent her on her own to visit her grandmother in Quinfaforca during the holidays. Quinfaforca is boring, and she isn't all that interested in hanging out with Grandma. The train ride starts strangely – Lia receives a »special ticket« for people who would rather not reach their destinations – and then things get even stranger. The train stops many times – but the question is: where?! There are no place names listed at the train stations. Also, the locations themselves are very odd: At one location, the buildings shine with all the colours of the rainbow; at another, the road signs are ultra-precise, listing distances to destinations down to the millimetre; at a third, people are only allowed to ask a question once one they have already heard the answer to it. Featuring lively coloured illustrations, this episodic children's novel blurs the lines between reality and dream. It is a very entertaining read, thanks to the many imaginative ideas and lively conversations that transpire between Lia and the people whom she encounters along the way. (Age: 8+)

6



Dong, Hongyou (text)
Cao, Qing (illus.)
Ye wa zi
(*The wild child*)
Nanchang: Er shi yi shi ji chu ban she
(21st Century Publishing Group), 2018. – 383 p.
ISBN 978-7-5568-3343-6

Nature | Hunting | Ecology | Environmental protection | Magic

Chun'er is born into a family of hunters. However, a dream convinces his grandfather to stop hunting on the day of Chun'er's birth. When the boy grows up, he possesses the magical ability to fly into the forest and help animals escape poachers, while his sleeping body remains lying on his bed. Thus, he becomes known as the »Weird Child« around the village. With the help of »wild men« in the forest, he and his friends finally win the war against the poachers. This novel not only urges readers to pay attention to the value of nature in a world of progressing industrialization, but also reminds them that human life is still deeply rooted in the natural world. Poet and children's book writer Dong Hongyou is the author of »Yi bai ge zhong guo hai zi de meng« (Dreams of a hundred Chinese children), »Yi bai ge hai zi de zhong guo meng« (A hundred children's China dreams), »Shi si sui de sen lin« (The 14-year-old forest) and other children's books. He has won several awards including the Chinese National Award for Outstanding Children's Literature. (Age: 10+)



7

Guo, Zhenyuan (text)

Zhu, Chengliang (illus.)

Bie rang tai yang diao xia lai

(Don't let the sun fall!)

Beijing: Zhong guo he ping chu ban she (China Peace Publishing House), 2018. – [36] p.

(Series: Xiao bai ge tong shu guan)

ISBN 978-7-5137-1225-5

Sunrise | Sunset | Animals | Folk art | Picture book

The animals are enjoying a sunny day on the mountain. However, in the afternoon, they find that the sun is setting in the sky. Each animal tries its best to grab it, but each fails, one by one. The sun sinks down eventually, and the animals strive to dig it out of the ground, until they fall asleep. When they wake up in the morning, they are happy to find that they have »dug« the sun back out. Guo Zhenyuan offers a humorous explanation of how the sun falls and rises. Illustrator Zhu Chengliang combines Chinese traditional lacquer art with oil painting, while the animals' images get their inspiration from traditional toys. Zhu has illustrated a number of award-winning picture books, including »Mian po po shui bu zhao« (Grandma Mian can't sleep) and »Da deng long« (Playing with lanterns). »Tuan yuan« (A New Year's reunion) won the Grand Prize of the 2009 Feng Zikai Children's Picture Books Award and was selected for »The New York Times's Best Illustrated Children's Books of 2011«. Zhu is nominated for the 2020 Hans Christian Andersen Award. (Age: 3+)



8

Liu, Haiqi (text)

Wang, Zumin / Wang, Ying (illus.)

You ge zi de xia tian

(The summer of pigeons)

Jinan: Shan dong jiao yu chu ban she (Shandong Education Press), 2019. – 295 p.

ISBN 978-7-5701-0460-4

China | History 1960s | Summer | Pigeon | Friendship | Growing up | Autobiography

This autobiographical novel portrays childhood life in a small town in Northern China in the 1960s. Haizi, the protagonist, has been longing to have his own pigeons, and one summer finds himself with a pair of them. In saving them from the butcher, who is a bully, Haizi regains his belief in life and the world. Colloquial-style narration gives this novel a charming flavour and has received high praise from critics. Liu Haiqi, renowned writer, publisher, and former Deputy Chairman on the Chinese Board on Books for Young People (CBBY), is the author of over thirty children's books including »Wu wei xiao shu li xian ji« (Adventures of a tailless mouse), »Ba ba shu« (Father tree), »Lü tou fa xian sheng xing yi ji« (The medical practice of Mr. Green-Hair) and »Dou zi di li de tong hua« (Fairy tales from the field of beans). His fairy-tales are known for their distinctive style. Liu, who in recent years has focused on writing children's novels, is the winner of the National Award for Outstanding Children's Literature and other awards. (Age: 8+)

9



Xie, Hua (text)
Huang, Li (illus.)

Wai po jia de ma

(The horses in Grandma's house)

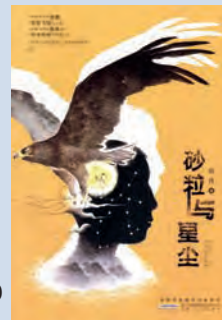
Zhengzhou: Hai yan chu ban she (Petrel Publishing House), 2019. – [34] p.

(Series: Dang dai zhong guo gu shi tu hua shu xi)
ISBN 978-7-5350-7773-8

Grandmother | Grandson | Horse |
Imagination | Picture book

Little Dot visits Grandma, who boards his horses. At first, there are five of them, but as their number increases, it becomes difficult for Grandma to accommodate them. Of course, they need space to stand, sit, sleep, and eat, and they also need to play, bathe, and celebrate birthdays. It makes one smile to discover that these horses are but a result of Little Dot's imagination, and it is gratifying to witness an adult understanding and responding to a child's daydreaming. On every double page, the illustrator juxtaposes the child's wonder world on one side with Grandma's world of reality on the other, providing inspiring interpolations and mutually illuminating explanations. Xie Hua, author of »Kuai le de Lao ti« (Laoti's stories) and many other children's books, started writing in the 1980s and, among others, has won China's National Award for Outstanding Children's Literature. Huang Li is the illustrator of »An de zhong zi« (An's seed), a bestseller and winner of the Excellent Picture Book Prize of 2009 Feng Zikai Children's Picture Book Award. (Age: 4+)

10



Xue, Tao (text)

Hui shi guang wen hua / Liu, Chuang (illus.)

Sha Li yu Xing Chen

(Sand and Stardust)

Hefei: An hui shao nian er tong chu ban she (Anhui Children's Publishing House), 2019. – 200 p.
ISBN 978-7-5707-0457-6

Father | Son | Runaway | Stargazer | Survival |
Spiritual quest

Fifteen-year-old Sha Li (Sand) runs away with his eagle. His father Sha Ye keeps waiting for him in their small village, which is constantly at risk of being swallowed by desert sand. Sha Li's eagle returns without the boy, and Sha Ye is unable to trace his son. Years later, another boy, Xing Chen (Stardust), having gotten lost while stargazing, enters Sha Ye's life. Together, they defend their world from a wolf pack. There is always a feeling of uneasiness in Xue Tao's fiction. This seemingly rural novel turns out to be more about spiritual discovery than about material survival. Whether for Sand or Stardust, on the ground or in the sky, there is always something in life worth chasing. For his children's novels and fairy tales, including »Jiu yue de bing he« (The ice river of September), »Xiao cheng chi« (The small castle), »Da fu wen« (The wealthy men), and »Shan hai jing xin chuan shuo« (The new classic of mountains and seas), he has won, among others, the Chinese National Award for Outstanding Children's Literature. (Age: 12+)



11

Fung, Michelle Kuen Suet (Feng, Juanxue) (text/illus.)

Tin Hong Gaau Jyu

(Tian kong jiao yu)

(*Plastic, plastic, everywhere!*)

Hong Kong: San lian shu dian (Xiang gang) you xian gong si (Joint Publishing [Hong Kong] Company Limited), 2017. – 176 p.
ISBN 978-962-04-4184-4

Anthropocene | Environmental destruction | Plastic | Dystopia | Graphic novel

This multi-award-winning graphic novel tells the story of Ms Du, a hermit, who happens upon an injured sea turtle at the beach in 2200. She tells the animal her sad life story and, while she's at it, also recounts the most important event of the past 200 years: Scientists discovered that plastic tastes delicious and can be used as food for sea animals and children. The ancient turtle is preoccupied with its own memories, memories about a time when jellyfish swam in the sea instead of plastic bags. When Ms Du takes the turtle to the vet in her hometown, she finds it empty and in ruins, unaware that it was abandoned many years before. The people have disappeared, the turtle survives. Does this give cause for hope? The Chinese-Cantonese text is embedded in somber illustrations rendered in the style of Chinese ink paintings on hand-made paper. Like most of the texts, illustrations, installations, performances, and short films created by this Hong Kong artist, the book discusses the destruction of nature during the Anthropocene. (Age: 12+)



12

Lin, Denan (text) / Yu, Guangda (Yee, Patrick) (illus.)

Xin ku le hong tou jin. Lao shi cheng jian zhu nü gong de gu shi

(*The toil of the Red Headscarves*)

Singapore: Ling zi chuan mei si ren you xian gong si (Lingzi Media), 2018. – 40 p.
(Series: Shi cheng wang shi hui ben xi lie; 6)
ISBN 978-981-47-9155-7

Singapore | History | Immigration | Female worker | Samsui woman | Picture book

Agui, the eldest daughter of a Chinese farming family, is to be married to a rich old man, because the harvest is so poor that they can't even afford food anymore. Her mother helps her escape this situation by sending her to her aunt in Singapore. For a ridiculously low wage, Agui toils away as a day labourer on construction sites. Nevertheless, she sends most of her pay to her family, even long after her parents have passed away. Like many of these »Sanshuipo« (Samsui women), who mostly came to Malaysia and Singapore from Sanshui County in Guangdong in search of work and independence between 1920 and 1949, she remains unmarried and does not return to her home country when she grows old. Patrick Yee, one of Singapore's best-known children's book illustrators, uses this picture book to commemorate the workers who, after their typical headgear, were also called »Hongtoujin« (Red Headscarves) and became icons of Singapore's economic transformation in the 20th century. (Age: 6+)

13



Maniniwei (Lin, Wanwen) (text/illus.)
 Lim, Wan Kee (Lin, Wanqi) (transl.)
Mareni. Ma lai min jian gu shi = Mat Jenin.
Cerita rakyat Melayu
(Mat Jenin. A Malaysian folktale)
 Xin bei shi: Bu bu chu ban (Pace Books),
 2018. – 36 p. – ISBN 978-986-96286-4-8
 Text Chinese and Malaysian

Daydream | Folktale | Picture book |
 Bilingual book

Coconut picker Mat Jenin climbs up a palm tree and indulges in daydreams about his future fame and wealth. When he tumbles out of the tree, it's a harsh return to the real world. This Malaysian folktale is reminiscent of the European moralizing fable »The Milkmaid and Her Pail«. However, it does not focus on the moral that you mustn't let yourself get carried away by your imagination and forget reality. Rather, Taiwan's first Chinese-Malaysian bilingual picture book celebrates the daydream with relish. It does so in wonderful monochrome illustrations that are inspired by the traditional art of woodcuts of Chinese peasants and are set against bright floral motifs typical for traditional Malaysian batik fabrics. After completing her degree at the National Taiwan University of the Arts, the Malaysian-born author, illustrator, poet, and blogger Maniniwei stayed in Taiwan, where she published her first picture book in 2013. (Age: 8+)

14



Macan, Darko (text)
 Tomić, Tomislav (illus.)
Lice
(Faces)
 Zagreb: Sipar, 2017. – [26] p.
 ISBN 978-953-8039-24-9

Identity | Self-image | Transformation |
 Picture book

A boy really wants to be someone else and exchanges his face for a wolf's. When he wants to take off the wolf's face and get his own face back, he can't find it. He begins to search for his »true« face in vain, realizing he is seeking his own, lost identity. Meanwhile, his »true« face wanders about and finds many new wearers, such as a girl, a coin, or a lamb. In their picture book, author and comic artist Darko Macan (b. 1966), well-known in Croatia, and illustrator Tomislav Tomić (b. 1977) pursue a philosophical reflection on the matter of what defines a person or creature. The concise text and striking pen drawings show how one decision can completely change a life – and that sometimes such a decision ushers in regrets. (Age: 5+)

15



Pongrašić, Ema (text)

Zlatić, Tomislav (illus.)

Moj tata se smanjuje

(My Daddy is shrinking)

Zagreb: Kreativna Mreža & Knjiga u Centru,
2018. – 22 p.

ISBN 978-953-8244-05-6

Child | Parents | Relationship | Cycle of life |
Picture book

Parents shrink – or so it seems from a child's perspective. This is what the first-person narrator in Ema Pongrašić's (b. 1989) picture book experiences. His initially gigantic father becomes smaller over the course of the narrator's life, as the child-narrator grows bigger. But perceived size can change for other reasons, too. Parents shrink in their significance for their children: school and work become increasingly important; life partners and their own offspring take centre stage. Pongrašić keeps her text simple so that it invites readers to talk about what »becoming smaller« means, approaching the big questions of human relationships and lifespans. Tomislav Zlatić's (b. 1976) charming, humorous illustrations show what the text only hints at: Papa keeps shrinking, becomes tiny like a teacup, and in the end disappears totally from the picture, remaining but a memory. (Age: 3+)

16



Dočkalová, Bára (text)

Stibitzová, Petra Josefína (illus.)

Tajemství Oblázkové hory

(The secret of the pebble mountain)

Praha: Raketa v produkci nakladatelství Labyrint,
2018. – 242 p.

ISBN 978-80-86803-48-7

Adventure | Fantasy world | Self-confidence

A boy named Prcek and a girl named Krisa compete to join the tough gang on the rubbish dump. Both act confidently, wanting to belong. Inside, they are both unsure and lonely. When Krisa makes it into the gang, Prcek wants revenge. But then things become »fantastical«: The plot moves from the real here and now to a suspenseful adventure story with magical stones, a threatened kingdom, and tasks that Prcek and Krisa must complete. They form a bond of solidarity, gradually give up their hard façade, and realize that they actually like each other. With much feeling for the protagonists' inner states, the debut of Bára Dočkalová (b. 1977) considers what it is like not to be just a child anymore, but also not yet a young adult – to be stuck between the fantasies of childhood and the raw realism of youth. In 2019, the book was one of three nominees for the renowned Magnesia Litera Award. (Age: 9+)

CROATIAN
CZECH

Croatia
Czech Republic

17



Matocha, Vojtěch (text)
Osoha, Karel (illus.)

Prašina

(Dust Zone)

Praha: Paseka, s.r.o., 2018. – 260 p.
ISBN 978-80-7432-910-4

City district | Secret | Electricity | Invention |
Adventure | Detective novel | Science fiction

This book has everything it needs for building huge suspense plus a chill factor: a mysterious old neighbourhood in Prague that, for unknown reasons, has no electricity; winding, labyrinthian alleys and dark cellars; dodgy, villainous grown-ups; an ancient invention that threatens to destroy the whole city; encrypted maps, plans, and codes; and kids ready to jump right into the thick of things. Jirka (13), the main character, and his friend En are a great team, far removed from clichéd gender roles. Together they uncover the secret of Prašina (Dust Zone) and figure out what Jirka's grandpa, who lives there, has to do with it. The literary debut of mathematician Vojtech Matocha (b. 1989) combines the genres of adventure story, detective novel and science fiction in a thoroughly thrilling and spooky way. No wonder »Prašina« is counted among the most important new arrivals on the Czech children's literary scene in 2018. The book was also nominated for the prestigious Magnesia Litera Award. (Age: 10+)

18



Stará, Ester (text)
Starý, Milan (illus.)

Šedík a Bubi

(Šedík and Bubi)

Praha: Euromedia, 2018. – 89 p.
(Series: Pikola)
ISBN 978-80-7549-597-6

Friendship | Game | Fun | Consolation |
Dyslexia

Ester Stará and Milan Starý are a Czech super-duo for picture books and illustrated children's stories. In »Šedík and Bubi«, they tell a story by closely pairing text and image and by using many tricks to make reading easier. Colourful text-shading, for instance, segments words and sentences to support readers with dyslexia. Speech bubbles and comic strips create a light-hearted backdrop for the charming story about Šedík, a tom kitten, and Bubi, a pink bobble hat. The two become close friends and keep Šedík's siblings and everyone else on their toes. They have a lot of fun, but also console each other, because Bubi has no owner, and Šedík doesn't know where his mother is. Naturally, Bubi finds a fitting head by the end of the book, and Šedík finds his Mama. The story was awarded the Golden Ribbon Award in the Czech Republic. (Age: 5+)



19

Bestle, Tina Sakura (text)
Kristiansen, Teddy (illus.)

Bezunk og Egerket

(Bezunk and squirrel)

København: Gyldendal, 2018. – [50] p.

ISBN 978-87-02-22433-7

Loss | Friendship | Joy of living | Picture book

Loneliness and sadness. Bezunk's wife died 1,644 days ago, and he trudges on bravely. He gets through everyday life, but enjoyment and fun are gone. A little squirrel appears at his window, eagerly asking for cookies and wanting to try the »green dots in the winter-machine« – peas from the freezer. The squirrel returns again and again, irritating Bezunk with his energetic, inquisitive feistiness. At the same time, Bezunk is touched by the squirrel's cheerful candour and openness. The old man comes to care about the animal. And so the two strike a friendship. As different as they are, they are good companions. The picture book employs a subdued colour palette, which lets the red squirrel leap into the foreground. Many pictures open up inner spaces and show how Bezunk feels. The text mixes descriptive scenes and dialogue with little stream-of-consciousness passages, a sophisticated and very unusual approach. (Age: 4+)



20

Hegnhøj, Mette (text)

En prik og en streg. Godnateventyr til at tegne på ryggen

(A dot and a line. Bedtime stories that one can draw on one's back)

[København]: Jensen & Dalgaard, [2017]. – [36] p.

ISBN 978-87-7151-322-6

Bedtime story | Fingerplay | Picture book

»Det var engang en prik og en streg. / Men det var løgn. / Prikken var i virkeligheden Streg, / der havde rullet sig sammen. / Og strengen var i virkeligheden Prik, / der havde rullet sig ud.« (There once were a dot and a line. / But that was a lie. / Dot was really Line, / having rolled itself up. / And Line was really Dot, / having unrolled itself.) The simple geometric shapes of Dot and Line are the protagonists in Mette Hegnhøj's short bedtime stories. One can well imagine Dad and Mum cuddling with their child in bed, fingerplaying the story as they read: a poke with their index finger means »Dot«, a score with the middle finger means »Line«. Listeners may then contemplate why and how a line becomes a dot and vice versa, an activity which may run counter to the aim of falling asleep. The Danish publisher Jensen & Dalgaard publish unusual books, bedtime stories that encourage hands-on interaction between book, reading adult, and child. (Age: 2+)

21



Wung-Sung, Jesper (text)
Mortensen, John Kenn (illus.)

Alfred og gabestokken

(*Alfred and the pillory*)

København: Høst & Søn, 2018. – 99 p.

ISBN 978-87-638-5316-3

Truth | Outsider | Belonging |
Freedom of expression

Few are as capable as Danish author Jesper Wung-Sung at writing books that continually resist fitting into conventional categories, as well as unsettling expectations levelled at children's and young adult literature. He is tremendously productive and still consistently succeeds in portraying basic anthropological and existential themes in new ways, in the process alluding to well-known motifs and constellations. This time he writes about Alfred, who has been put in a pillory at the marketplace for having committed the offense of *lèse-majesté*. He stands there day in, day out, year after year, decade after decade, uttering truths in a direct, insolent, and commanding manner. At best, passers-by are inspired to reflect a little. This recalls children's characters like, for instance, in H.C. Andersen's fairy-tale »The Emperor's New Clothes«. In contrast, Alfred suffers from his need to speak truth, which exposes him to mockery and brands him as an outsider. He would love to belong, but he cannot and will not submit to the rules, which govern society. (Age: 10+)

22



Crabeels, Kim (text)
Tolman, Marije (illus.)

Kleine Struis. Een voorleesverhaal over bang zijn

(*Little ostrich. A read-aloud story about being afraid*)

[Tielt]: Lannoo, [2018]. – [28] p.

(Series: Superdieren)

ISBN 978-94-014-5086-7

Animals | Fear | Loneliness | Picture book

Little ostrich lives in the savannah with many other animals. He is afraid of everybody and everything in the savannah. That's the reason he always buries his head in the sand, because there, under the sand, he feels as safe as he did when he was still inside the egg. There are also animals underground who disturb him, but he keeps his head buried nonetheless. One day he hears a beautiful noise, a soft voice, above him. Little ostrich looks around and discovers that all the animals are peacefully lying next to each other. He meets an ostrich girl, and they fall in love. This philosophical and endearing picture book invites children to talk about its themes: fear, loneliness, and finding somebody to share one's life with. The story is told in a poetic language, with few words and short sentences that still say a lot. The pronounced rhythm makes it a book that should be read aloud. Expressive illustrations interpret and complete the story, with humour and an atmospheric use of colours. (Age: 4+)



23

Lammers, Pim (text)

Praagman, Milja (illus.)

De boer en de dierenarts

(The farmer and the veterinarian)

Wielsbeke: De Eenhoorn, [2018]. – [28] p.

ISBN 978-94-6291-288-5

Falling in love | Homosexuality | Emotion |
Diversity | Picture book

Everything is going wrong at the farm. The farmer searches the pigs for eggs, and he wants to shave the cow instead of the sheep. He is all in a muddle and keeps finding excuses to take one of the animals to the veterinarian. The farmer is in love with the veterinarian, but too shy to ask him to a picnic. Thus, the animals decide to help their farmer. And the veterinarian finally understands what's ailing the farmer – love-sickness. The story of this endearing picture book about love – especially love between two men – is told with simplicity in poetic language. Well-chosen words can help approach a theme that some consider »difficult«. This is certainly the case in this book, whose message is: Love is for everyone. The multi-layered black-and-white pencil drawings have a surprisingly intense coloration. The illustrator uses different perspectives, paying special attention to the eyes of both the human and animal characters. (Age: 4+)



24

Loon, Inez van (text)

Mathilde, ik kom je halen

(Mathilde, I am coming to get you)

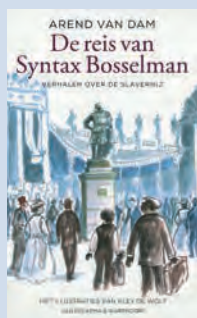
[Hasselt] [et al.]: Clavis, [2018]. – 183 p.

ISBN 978-90-448-3270-9

Belgium | History 1900-1914 | Child labour

This historical youth novel is situated in the Rupel-streek, a part of the province of Antwerp, at the beginning of the 20th century. After the death of her mother, thirteen-year-old Mathilde is sent away to live with her uncle and aunt because her father has to work all day and doesn't have time to take care of her and her eight siblings. Like the father and some of her siblings, the girl must work in the brick industry. She discovers what it means to work there and how the workers are exploited. After she is sexually harassed and threatened by a supervisor, Mathilde flees to the city of Antwerp, where she finds work as a simple servant for a rich family. This gripping, well-documented piece of historical fiction is based on the author's grandmother's life. It decries the way unschooled workers were treated at the beginning of the last century. It also chronicles how people began to revolt against factory owners. This cultural-historical novel makes young readers think about oppression and labour rights, not only in history, but also in today's world. (Age: 11+)

25



Dam, Arend van (text)
Wolf, Alex de (illus.)

**De reis van Syntax Bosselman.
Verhalen over de slavernij**

(The journey of Syntax Bosselman.

A story about slavery)

Houten: Van Holkema & Warendorf, [2018]. – 298 p.
ISBN 978-90-00-35915-8

Netherlands | History 19th century |
Colonialism | Slavery | Non-fiction

During the International Colonial and Export Exhibition, which attracted over a million visitors to Amsterdam in the summer of 1883, a diverse group of Surinamese people built their huts in the exhibition hall. During the day, they lay in their hammocks in front of their huts, and at night, they slept on hard Dutch bunkbeds. They were considered part of the exhibition. For this book, historical author Arend van Dam researched the life of one of the participants in the exhibition: 60-year-old former plantation slave Syntax Bosselman, who went to the Netherlands on the invitation of the exhibition's organizers ten years after the abolition of slavery. Arend van Dam tells the story of this man, but also talks about the general history of slavery. At the same time this is about the nature of historical research and how to deal with outdated and racially disparaging Dutch terms. This book will give many young readers – as well as parents and teachers – a clearer picture of the history of slavery. (Age: 10+)

26



Donkelaar, Maria van (text)
Weve, Sylvia (illus.)

**Zo kreeg Midas ezelsoren. De mooiste
Metamorfosen van Ovidius**

*(How Midas gets donkey ears. The most beautiful
metamorphoses of Ovid)*

Haarlem: Gottmer, [2019]. – 109 p.
ISBN 978-90-257-7005-1

Ovid / Metamorphoses

Orpheus wishes to rescue his wife Eurydice from the underworld, and Europa is stolen by Jupiter. These are among the 23 stories collected here, all based upon the great poems of Ovid's world-famous »Metamorphoses« and re-told for young readers in present-day language. Stories about Roman gods, heroes, and creatures are transposed to modern times. The characters are often vengeful or love-struck, and they are constantly being misled by others. Although most of the stories are tragic, they are told in a very humorous and light-hearted way. The text is rhymed and excellent to read aloud. Sylvia Weve's unique technique of drawing outside the lines yields expressive illustrations featuring strong black lines and eye-catching colours, which don't shy away from depicting the stories' cruel elements. In the illustrations, some characters and symbols reappear in different places. In 2019, Sylvia Weve was awarded the Max Velthuis Prize, the most important award for illustrators in the Netherlands. (Age: 12+)



27

Geldof, Wilma (text)

Het meisje met de vlechtjes. Gebaseerd op het waargebeurde verhaal van Nederlands jongste verzetsmeisje

(The girl with the braids. Based on the real story of Netherlands's youngest female resistance fighter)
Amsterdam: Luitingh-Sijthoff, [2018]. – 333 p.
ISBN 978-90-245-8159-7

Netherlands | World War II | Resistance | Oversteegen, Freddie | Siblings | Historical fiction

Freddie, vividly portrayed as a young and spirited girl, is only fourteen when she and her sister join the Resistance in occupied Netherlands during World War II. They are not afraid of anything or anyone, and since Freddie looks like she's about twelve years old, no German soldiers suspect her of working for the Resistance. Their mother insists that they should never become like the enemy, and never kill anyone. But as members of the Resistance, the girls get involved in eliminating Nazis and their sympathizers. The story's atmosphere grows very tense in such moments and its explicitness is often shocking, even more so because readers share Freddie's conflicting emotions. The intensity of resistance work and the insanity of war are impressively captured. The novel is based on conversations with Freddie Oversteegen (1925-2018), who helped author Wilma Geldof when she was writing the book. Freddie died at the age of 93 some months before this absorbing, important, and sincere portrait of an incredibly brave girl was published. (Age: 15+)



28

Meinderts, Koos (text)

Various artists (illus.)

De schelmenstreken van Reynaert de Vos

(The tricks of Reynard the Fox)

[Hoorn]: Hoogland & Van Klaveren, 2018. – 37 p.
ISBN 978-90-8967-273-5

Fox | Trick | Trickster | Fable

Reynard the Fox has many deceitful tricks and misdeeds to his (dis)credit, and now must defend himself before the king. Several servants to the king visit Reynard one after the other to persuade him to come to court, but every time Reynard succeeds in repelling them, and certainly not in a nice way. His cousin Grimbard the Badger manages to get Reynard to the trial before the king, but, even then, Reynard is clever enough to escape. These stories are based on the famous and often recounted medieval fables about the legendary fox. Koos Meinderts imbues the stories with modern elements and a lot of humour, and builds up natural suspense, just like in the original tales. Each of the stories is illustrated by one of twenty well-known illustrators. The readers see Reynard interpreted many different ways and with a wide range of illustration techniques. This volume hence also presents a kaleidoscope of contemporary children's book illustration in the Netherlands. (Age: 10+)

29



Samson, Gideon (text)
Joshua, Joren (illus.)

Zeb.

Amsterdam: Leopold, [2018]. – 90 p.
ISBN 978-90-258-7394-3

School | Imagination | Storytelling

Eleven students from one class, all aged around ten, talk about something strange that they have seen or done. Their stories are usually funny or slightly philosophical. The characters sometimes don't seem to care if things happen in the stories that are actually impossible. Still, the stories are not as innocent as they seem. The children's bright and breezy world can be a little dangerous at times, and it is precisely this element that makes Gideon Samson's work so clever. The author, a master of language and style, seems to be implying: There isn't anything better than the imagination, but be careful what you dream up because it might come true. This is a book of crazy events in an ordinary school class, all about misfits and peer pressure, which will give readers plenty to talk about. This is the first children's book that Joren Joshua has illustrated. In 2010, Gideon Samson was the youngest-ever winner of the renowned Dutch Silver Pencil Award. »Zeb.« was awarded the Silver Pencil (for writing) and the Silver Brush (for illustration) in 2019. (Age: 10+)

30



Vendel, Edward van de (text)
Tolman, Marije (illus.)

Vosje

(*Little Fox*)

Amsterdam: Querido, 2018. – [82] p.
ISBN 978-90-214-1434-8

Fox | Dream

A fox cub wants nothing more than to discover life, but he takes a tumble and finds himself in a dream that is a kind of near-death experience. In five double spreads, illustrator Marije Tolman gives the reader the space to get to know Little Fox and his habitat, which she depicts using cleverly arranged grainy blue-green photographs of beach and dune landscapes. The pen drawings of animals and the cheerful bright-orange fox cub shown from varying perspectives make the spreads into intriguing works of art. Edward van de Vendel takes the reader through the dream, writing in clear sentences about the happiness of life's small moments that delight the senses. What is actually happening is that Little Fox, hovering between life and death, is seeing his life pass before his eyes like a film. Marije Tolman and Edward van de Vendel have created an accessible, attractive, and multi-layered book. This is children's literature at a high level. (Age: 6+)



31

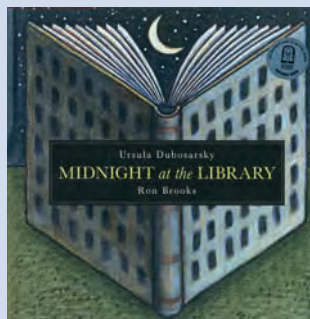
Bauer, Michael Gerard (text)

The things that will not stand

Gosford, N.S.W.: Omnibus Books, an imprint of Scholastic Australia Pty Ltd, 2018. – 217 p.
ISBN 978-1-74299-758-2

Storytelling | Falling in love | Truth | Pain | Bullying | Grief

Sebastian and his best friend Tolly are at a university's Future Students Open Day to check out possible career paths. Yet instead of attentively listening to an eye-opening (not!) lecture about town planning, this »Very Ordinary Guy« ends up falling in love with a PFH (perfect female human). Unrequited love, of course. His day seems ruined, until the wrong girl, Frida, rescues him from making a complete fool of himself. Frida is fascinating, mysterious, potentially lethal – and a great storyteller. However, Seb is never quite sure which of her stories are fact, which fiction, and he becomes obsessed with finding out the truth. The action in this witty, thought-provoking novel takes place over the course of a single day, in which the readers catch glimpses of the two protagonists' deeply scarred lives. With his knack for hilarious and at the same time utterly profound stories, Michael Gerard Bauer has created an intense read about grief, bullying, courage, and the power of storytelling. (Age: 14+)



32

Dubosarsky, Ursula (text)

Brooks, Ron (illus.)

Midnight at the library

Canberra, ACT: NLA Publishing, 2018. – [37] p.
ISBN 978-0-642-27931-6

Book | Library | History

»Midnight at the Library« is a collaboration between two highly renowned Australian children's literature creators. It pairs Ursula Dubosarsky's intense lyrical text with Ron Brooks's stunning illustrations to tell two intertwined stories. One story follows two young children on a hunt for a specific book on their midnight romp through a library: »The little books is very old / the little book is made of gold.« The second narrative strand, while recounting the creation of this particular little book, remembers the defining moments in the »lives« of books throughout history. The powerful full-page illustrations pick up these pivotal moments, such as the invention of the printing press by Johannes Gutenberg or the burning of books by the Nazi regime during World War II. Executed in different media and styles, the pictures pay homage to various artists, including M.C. Escher and Vincent van Gogh. Published to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the National Library of Australia, this gem will enchant book lovers worldwide. (Age: 5+)

33



Gough, Erin (text)
Amelia Westlake

Richmond, Victoria: Hardie Grant Egmont,
 2018. – 344 p.
 ISBN 978-1-7601-2715-2

Private school | All girls' school | Discrimination | Feminism | Homosexuality | Injustice

Wilhelmina Everhart and Harriet Price couldn't be more different: While Will considers herself something of an activist, doesn't see eye to eye with her teachers, and is disgusted with the unfairness and discrimination in her exclusive all girls' school, prefect Harriet is a typical teachers' pet, has the perfect (if a tad overly ambitious) girlfriend, and is naively grateful for all the opportunities that Rosemead Grammar provides. Or is she really? Then why does she let bad-girl Will rope her into creating a series of critical cartoons, articles, and hoaxes that denounce the school's many ongoing problems? This might be her downfall – or the beginning of a true love story. Following her award-winning novel »Flywheel« (Hardie Grant, 2015), Erin Gough has created a fast-paced, feminist, laugh-out-loud romantic comedy with elements of a detective novel. Told in alternating chapters from the two protagonists' points of view, the book combines an entertaining plotline with important issues. (Age: 15+)

34

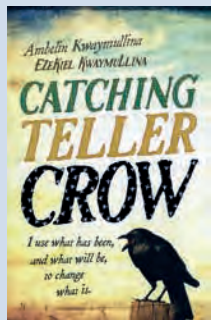


Gray-Barnett, Daniel (text/illus.)
Grandma Z

Brunswick, Victoria: Scribble, 2018. – [32] p.
 ISBN 978-1-925322-15-6

Boredom | Grandmother | Grandson | Birthday | Adventure | Picture book

Based in Melbourne and founded in 2016, Scribble – the picture book imprint of Scribe Publications – prides itself on presenting a »vibrant, eclectic list of illustrated books for children by brilliant writers and artists [...]«. Daniel Gray-Barnett's debut picture book »Grandma Z« definitely fits the description. It depicts the transformation of young Albert from a perfectly groomed, well-behaved boy, who suffers a boring existence deprived of joy in an extremely ordinary town, into a vivacious adventurer. All it takes to turn his grey world upside down, or orange-blue, is a heartfelt birthday wish and – zap – eccentric Grandma Z arrives on her motorbike and takes him on the ride of his life. Bold illustrations in different sizes catapult the two protagonists into a humdrum world of craziness, rendered in bright orange, black, and blue. The book is a celebration of imagination as well as of the magic of extraordinary moments that children can find in their everyday lives. (Age: 4+)



35

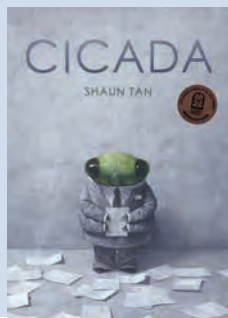
Kwaymullina, Ambelin /
Kwaymullina, Ezekiel (text)

Catching Teller Crow

Crows Nest, NSW: Allen & Unwin, 2018. – 196 p.
ISBN 978-1-76063-162-8

Aboriginal community | Death | Grief |
Ghost | Murder | Racism | Children's home

Beth Teller was killed in a car accident and her dad is beside himself with grief. So when his boss sends him to a small town to investigate an allegedly easy new case – an (accidental) fire destroyed a children's home and a corpse was found on site – the teenage girl-turned-ghost hopes that this will set her dad back on the right path and is determined to help. But then two more people turn up dead within 24 hours, and the stories of the only witness, a young Aboriginal girl called Isobel »Izzy« Catching, prove that this case is anything but easy. The quiet town seems to harbour some shocking secrets. Can Catching, Teller, and the mysterious Crow get to the bottom of the tragedy? In this superbly crafted suspenseful thriller-cum-ghost-story told from two points of view – Beth's in prose, Izzy's in lyrical free verse – the Aboriginal author team tackle a number of challenging issues, including grief, violence, racism, and the darkest parts of Australia's colonial history. (Age: 13+)



36

Tan, Shaun (text/illus.)

Cicada

Sydney, N.S.W.: Lothian, 2018. – [32] p.
ISBN 978-0-7344-1863-0

Outsider | Discrimination | Loneliness | Free-
dom | Cicada | Cycle of life | Picture book

Fans of award-winning artist Shaun Tan know that every new book of his is a special treat as well as a challenge. There is never just one layer. »Cicada« is a tale about an insect, clad in a grey suit and tie, who slaves away in a huge company's sterile office cubicle for seventeen years. Despite the almost robot-like perfection of his performance, the eponymous hero never receives any appreciation; he is maltreated and abused. The concise text is written in clipped, rough free verse, with each stanza concluding with the same call, »Tok, Tok, Tok«, which might refer to the noise cicadas make, or the tapping on a keyboard, the ticking of a clock, etc.... The feeling of oppression created by the powerful monochrome illustrations only lifts when Cicada breaks out of his grey chrysalis as a fiery red creature, free at last, to fly away into a colourful future with other cicadas. In this seemingly simple book, Shaun Tan alludes to a multitude of complex topics, including bullying, belonging, endurance, and liberation. (Age: 5+)

37



James, Matt (text/illus.)

The funeral

Toronto; Berkeley: Groundwood Books /
House of Anansi Press, 2018. – [40] p.
ISBN 978-1-55498-908-9

Death | Zest for life | Picture book

»F-U-N« is all that Norma can read on the little flag showing her family the way to great-uncle Frank's funeral. And why shouldn't it be fun? It's a day off school and Norma's chance to spend time with her favourite cousin Ray. While the service seems awfully long, the triangle sandwiches at the reception restore Norma's spirits. She slips outside with Ray to play, romping across the pages. The wordless double spread at the centre of the book grants a bird's eye view of the two children running across the vast lawn up to the cemetery, where the gravestones are grouped beneath blossoming pink cherry trees. This image exudes pure joy and love of life. With minimal text and maximum impact images, Matt James creates a gentle, life-affirming picture book about life and death. Using dimensional elements made from cut paper, masking tape, cardboard, and scroll-sawn masonite, he adds visual and emotional texture to the acrylics and ink. »Mom«, Norma shares on the way home, »I think Uncle Frank would have liked his funeral.« (Age: 4+)

38



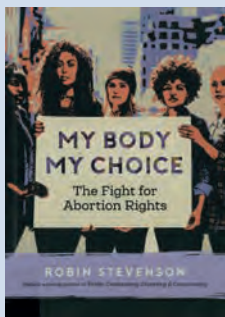
Smith, Heather (text)

Ebb & flow

Toronto, ON: Kids Can Press, [2018]. – 227 p.
ISBN 978-1-77138-838-2

Friendship | Betrayal | Disability | Island |
Verse novel

»Sometimes, / if you read hard enough / the whole world disappears.« But it has a way of coming back. Like ebb and flow. Like the lines of free verse of this novel, which perfectly capture the changing emotions of first-person-narrator Jett, who is spending the summer with his grandma Jo to forget what happened in that »rotten bad year« on the main land. As happy and painful memories wash over Jett, readers begin to piece together the events that led him to betray one friend – only to prove his loyalty to another. Smith succeeds in creating well-rounded, convincing characters whose past has marked their present. The Atlantic island is more than just the setting; it sets the tone and rhythm of the verse novel and becomes a place of healing. Feelings of shame and guilt or love find authentic expression in the form of free verse, which leaves lots of room for silence and reflection. This poetic middle grade novel was shortlisted for the 2018 Governor General's Literary Award. (Age: 9+)



39

Stevenson, Robin (text)
Fitzgerald, Meags (illus.)

My body, my choice. The fight for abortion rights

[Victoria, British Columbia]: Orca Book Publishers, 2019. – 175 p.

(Series: Orca issues)

ISBN 978-1-4598-1712-8

Abortion | Reproductive justice | Activism | Non-fiction

What is an abortion? And: Who has an abortion? Given the statistics – over 50 million abortions are performed worldwide each year – it is surprising that the topic is such a taboo in young adult literature. As with most controversial issues, there is a lot of misinformation and judgement surrounding abortion, and this is why this book is so important. Award-winning author Robin Stevenson helps readers to be well informed, beginning with definitions and statistics and a fascinating history of abortion, showing very clearly how systemic racism and misogyny have shaped the practice and debate around it. She presents the fight for choice and safe abortion in Canada, the United States, and round the world as well as the fight against it (with a section on the Trump-Pence administration). The concluding chapter puts abortion into the context of reproductive justice. Personal testimonials and great graphic design bring the subject home. The new Orca Issues series makes a courageous and relevant contribution to debates about social justice. (Age: 12+)



40

Anderson, Sophie (text)
Paganelli, Elisa (illus.)

The house with chicken legs

London: Usborne, 2018. – 336 p.

ISBN 978-1-4749-4066-5

Grandmother | Granddaughter | Destiny | Grief | Death | Love | Selfishness

As a child, Sophie Anderson was fascinated by stories that her Prussian grandmother told her about the Russian witch Baba Yaga. So it seems only natural that she decided to »borrow« the character to create her own modern fairy tale featuring this mysterious woman. In this very original, entertaining, and suspenseful novel, the Baba Yaga's traditional dwelling – a small house moving around on strong chicken legs – is the home of young orphan Marinka and her loving Grandmother Baba. The old woman is a Yaga, i.e. a person welcoming the dead to her home and preparing them for their journey through The Gate and into the world beyond. Marinka's destiny is to succeed Baba one day. However, the headstrong girl would much rather befriend living people, go to school, and decide for herself how to spend her life. Little does she expect that her stubbornness almost results in her own death. However, in the end she manages to redefine the traditional role and take control of her destiny. (Age: 10+)

41



Arévalo Melville, Elena (text/illus.)

Umbrella

London: Scallywag Press, 2019. – [32] p.
ISBN 978-1-912650-01-9

Umbrella | Magic | Imagination | Greed |
Punishment | Picture book

It might be a beautiful morning in the park, but without any company Clara feels bored and lonely; until she gently picks up an abandoned (obviously enchanted) umbrella and is granted her wish: a little cat to play with. And the talking umbrella's magic doesn't end there; it also produces a real elephant, who helps old Mr Roberts pick some apples, and a butterfly band playing music for everyone to dance to. While they are all having a ball, greedy, sly Mr Fox sneaks closer to steal the bewitched object away for his own satisfaction – but immediately gets his comeuppance. Elena Arévalo Melville, born in Guatemala and now based in Cambridge, has created atmospheric, matt mixed-media illustrations that take little Clara into a magical realm where »...anything is possible«. This witty and whimsical picture book is part of the first list of books published by Scallywag Press, a new publishing house who focuses on memorable picture books from around the world, including re-editions of picture book classics such as Roger Duvoisin's »The Happy Lion«. (Age: 3+)

42



Davies, Nicola (text)

Cobb, Rebecca (illus.)

The day the war came

London: Walker Books, 2018. – [30] p.
ISBN 978-1-4063-7632-6

War | Refugee | Survival | Loneliness |
Coping with trauma | School | Picture book

This moving collaboration is narrated from the perspective of an unnamed girl. At first, she simply chats about her daily routine, family, and school. Yet one day, her life changes drastically: »just after lunch, war came.« The peaceful, happy world depicted in colour pencil in warm shades is suddenly invaded and overwhelmed by huge black-grey clouds and red-hot fire – the turning point of the book. Although the story of a displaced girl who longs to go to school again was inspired by a true event (as the author explains in the afterword), the book goes beyond the specific by leaving ample space for the readers' own thoughts and interpretations and making any refugee child's trauma palpable. Eventually, the kindness of a young boy and his friends signals a positive change for the girl. The powerful illustrations and the poetic story, in which the offering of a chair works beautifully on both the literal and the metaphorical level, create a seamless, thought-provoking story that provides a perfect incentive for discussing war and refugees. (Age: 6+)



43

Duffy, Malcolm (text)

Me mam. Me dad. Me.

London: Zephyr, 2018. – 310 p.

ISBN 978-1-78669-765-3

Mother | Boyfriend | Abuse | Domestic
violence | Communication | Secret

As long as Danny can remember, it's always been just the two of them: he and his mother in a small council flat, no luxuries, and no holidays. He's a regular guy who's keen on football, not too keen on school, and has recently found a girlfriend. And he really loves his mum. When she gets together with new boyfriend Callum, who spoils her rotten and soon asks them to move into his posh house with a giant TV screen and fast car, the fourteen-year-old boy is happy for her. That is until Danny discovers Callum's violent and abusive side and starts fearing for his mother's life. Feeling completely overwhelmed and helpless, the only person he assumes will be able to deal with the problem is his father, whom he has never met. Yet the secret trip to Scotland doesn't exactly turn out as planned. This heart-wrenching debut novel about love and domestic violence is set in the Newcastle area and told in the very distinctive voice of a Geordie teenager who makes a few fateful decisions trying to save his mother's life. (Age: 12+)



44

Gourlay, Candy (text)

Bone talk

Oxford: David Fickling Books, 2018. – 246 p.

ISBN 978-1-788450-18-8

Philippines | History 1899 | Bontok <people> |
Traditional life | War | Coming of age |
Gender role | Colonialism

Filipino-British author Candy Gourlay's third book for children is a compelling piece of historical fiction with a special setting. At the end of the 19th century, Cordillera, a highland region of the Philippines, is the home of the Bontok people, who live a traditional life unaffected by western civilization. Boys and girls are striving to fulfill (or break out of) their gender-specific roles to become brave warriors and caring housewives respectively, and decisions are discussed with the elders, and guided by the assistance of the ancestors' spirits. When one day, a light-skinned, blue-eyed, tall stranger – an American – appears in their remote mountain village, the daily routine of ten-year-old Samkad and his best friend, tomboy Little Luki, is turned upside down: Foreign languages, guns, deceit, exploitation, and war enter their world. This gripping novel imagines what living in a country on the brink of colonisation might have been like. Told from the point of view of a courageous indigenous boy, the book whisks readers away into a fascinating, unfamiliar world. (Age: 12+)

45



Harrold, A.F. (text)
Gravett, Emily (illus.)

The afterwards

London [et al.]: Bloomsbury Children's Books,
2018. – 224 p.
ISBN 978-1-4088-9431-6

Friendship | Death | Grief | Afterworld |
Supernatural

Following the highly praised »The Imaginary« (Bloomsbury, 2015), this haunting children's novel is the second collaboration between A.F. Harrold and Emily Gravett in which things invisible to most people play an important role. In »The Afterwards«, Ember and Ness are two girls who have been almost inseparable for the past three years. Yet one day, Ness falls off the swing at the playground, hits her head, and dies. All of a sudden, Ember is supposed to navigate the world without her BFF. When she accidentally discovers a mysterious black-and-gray world in-between, where Ness – and other dead people and animals – seem to be hovering before they move on, Ember is determined to bring her friend back. Ignoring all warnings, she comes up with the most daring plans – and almost gets herself killed. This suspenseful and poetic novel, adorned with delicate, soft, and slightly sinister illustrations, tackles the challenging topic of grief in an unusual mixture of thoughtful, (partly) realistic story and gripping thriller. (Age: 10+)

46



Macfarlane, Robert (text)
Morris, Jackie (illus.)

The lost words. A spell book

[London]: Hamish Hamilton, Penguin Random
House, 2017. – [130] p.
ISBN 978-0-241-25358-8

Nature | Word | Disappearance | Celebration |
Poetry

This marvellous large-format volume was inspired by the decision to remove 50 »nature words« from a widely used children's dictionary, claiming they were not »being used enough by children to merit inclusion.« Renowned artist Jackie Morris was outraged by this decision and approached writer Robert Macfarlane with an idea to save these important words. To each word, the book dedicates three double-page spreads: On the first one, the letters of the word are scattered around the page amid a sketchy or barren landscape from which this particular plant or animal is missing. The second spread features a full-page illustration of the »protagonist« accompanied by an acrostic poem or »spell« to summon the words back into the world. The final spread presents a full-colour painting of the plant or animal in its natural habitat. The book, with its evocative texts and stunning watercolour illustrations, is a joyful celebration of our natural environment, and has kicked off an important movement that includes a touring musical project and album with numerous new spell songs. (Age: 4+)

47



Mathias, Tracey (text)

Night of the party

London: Scholastic Children's Books,

2018. – 432 p.

ISBN 978-1-407188-00-3

Brexit | Racism | Right-wing extremism |
Deportation | Illegal immigration | Drugs |
Death

Ash and Zara meet by accident during a blackout on the London underground. They start going on runs across the heath, spend more and more time with each other, and inevitably fall in love. Happy end? No! Because this is not a soppy love story, but a complex and very topical YA novel with lots of twists and turns. Eighteen months prior, Zara's friend Sophie died at a party from a drug overdose, yet the only eye-witness was Zara; and even though she would love to see the culprit punished and help Sophie's family (including her big brother – Ash!) make their peace, she can't; as an »illegal«, i.e. a person not born in Britain, she and her mother live in hiding to avoid being deported by the leading nationalist party. Their only hope is the impending election that might bring about change. Tracey Mathias has conjured up a dystopian scenario that may (at current still) be fictional but doesn't seem particularly unlikely anymore – which makes this a terrifying and important read for readers of any age. (Age: 14+)

48



Roberts, David (text/illus.)

Laverne, Lauren (foreword)

Suffragette. The battle for equality

London: Two Hoots, 2018. – 127 p.

ISBN 978-1-5098-3967-4

Women's rights | Suffrage movement |
Great Britain | History 1832-1928 |
Non-fiction

In 2018, the UK celebrated the centenary of the year when (some) women were given the right to vote. To mark this occasion, a multitude of books about women's rights and the suffrage movement were published. In addition to interesting historical novels, such as Sally Nicholls's »Things a Bright Girl Can Do« (Andersen Press, 2017), there are several non-fiction works that provide a wealth of information on the fight that courageous women (and a few men, too) engaged in. Renowned illustrator David Roberts's offering on the topic is not only a very detailed and clearly written chronological introduction to events leading to more equality for women, it is also a beautifully illustrated one, with plenty of cartoony full-page pictures and vignettes. The book covers key events, important members – as well as opponents – of the suffrage movement, and explains challenges and problems. By imbuing it all with a dose of his trademark sense of humour, David Roberts makes this important period in history come alive for young and older readers alike. (Age: 10+)

49



Soundar, Chitra (text)
Ranade, Soumitra (photos/design)

Varsha's Varanasi

Chennai: Karadi Tales Company Pvt. Ltd.,
2018. – [40] p.

(Series: The city series)

ISBN 978-81-8190-348-8

[Varanasi](#) | [City guide](#) | [Daughter](#) | [Father](#) |
[Picture book](#) | [Photo book](#)

In this unusual photo picture book, the first volume in the planned »The City Series«, readers follow a young girl as she rushes through her home town, the sacred city of Varanasi in north-east India. Young Varsha is trying to find her father, who works as a tour guide, to hand him his pair of spectacles that he forgot at their house in the morning. Varsha runs through narrow lanes, to the banks of the river Ganges, to the Kashi Vishwanath and the Kal Bhairawa temples, to the Alamgiri Mosque, and various other tourist sites. Yet although she is hot on her Dad's heels, she always seems to have just missed him. The outstanding feature of this book are the stunningly composed, digitally altered photo collages. With their many details and varying perspectives, they perfectly capture the busy bustle of city life and invoke curiosity about Varanasi. The appendix includes a city map as well as further facts and details about each of the spots depicted. A truly interesting introduction to a fascinating place. (Age: 6+)

50



Forde, Patricia (text)
Brasliņa, Elina (illus.)

Bumpfizzle the Best on planet Earth

Dublin: Little Island Books, 2018. – 120 p.

ISBN 978-1-912417-03-2

[Everyday life](#) | [Extra-terrestrial being](#) | [Secret mission](#) | [Misunderstanding](#) | [Family](#)

Bumpfizzle the Best, great warrior from Planet Plonk, is sent to Earth as a spy on a mysterious mission. Taking the form of a ten-year-old earthling boy, known to his host family as Daniel, the alien has to send regular reports to the Great Master on his home planet. In this highly entertaining slim volume, the young protagonist expresses incredulous astonishment about the most mundane aspects of daily life, such as a »dangerous« pet cat, weird grandparents, and annoying siblings. Bumpfizzle's various (un)successful attempts at blending in and fulfilling his task, the family's increasingly annoyed reaction to their middle child's behaviour, and the Great Master's growing rage with this »useless operative of the large snort-hole« all get a mention in Bumpfizzle's diary. What makes this book shine is the convincing narrative with its consistent alien point of view that leaves readers wondering whether Daniel may truly be an extraterrestrial creature or simply an ordinary boy with an over-active imagination. (Age: 7+)



51

Bennett, Michael (text)

Sang, Anthony (illus.)

Helen and the Go-go Ninjas

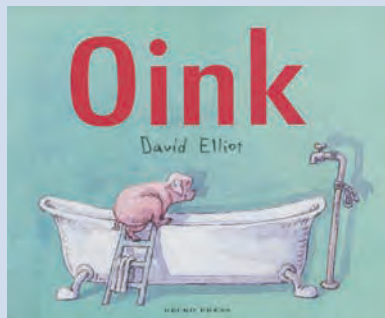
[Auckland]: Penguin Random House

New Zealand, 2018. – [260] p.

ISBN 978-0-14-377124-1

Global warming | Scientific experiment | Mind control | Time travel | Slavery | Dystopia | Science fiction | Graphic novel

For this dystopian graphic novel, renowned writer and filmmaker Michael Bennet has teamed up with award-winning cartoonist and illustrator Ant Sang. They deliver a captivating sci-fi adventure that can be devoured in one sitting, yet is much more than superficial action entertainment. The multi-layered time-travel story tackles serious issues. Starting off in the present, when ambitious young scientist Marion is about to present a revolutionary discovery of his, the story immediately picks up pace with the kidnapping of eco-activist Helen, Marion's girlfriend, by a mysterious team calling themselves the Go-Go Ninjas. The amazon-like fighters take Helen forward into the year 2355, where she witnesses a post-global-warming world controlled by huge floating »peace balls« that turn people into brainless slaves. Helen joins the ninjas when she realizes she may have the key to save the world. The diverse cast of characters and the combination of action-driven, thought-provoking, and witty scenes are just two aspects that make this a highly satisfying read. (Age: 13+)



52

Elliot, David (text/illus.)

Oink

Wellington: Gecko Press, [2018]. – [32] p.

ISBN 978-1-776572-14-4

Bath | Relaxing | Anger | Trick | Picture book

Pig is looking forward to a relaxing, hot bath. Yet unfortunately, the peace and quiet doesn't last long: Sheep, Cow, and Donkey, three very noisy and energetic »friends«, take over the steaming bathtub, and Pig gets grumpier by the minute; until he has an ingenious, very pig-like idea to get rid of the intruders... Award-winning children's book artist David Elliot has always had an affinity for creating witty, idiosyncratic animal characters. »Oink« follows in the same vein. The almost wordless book invites readers to closely study the expressive watercolour pictures in muted colours in order to unlock the clues in the animals' facial expressions and body language. The audience will discover how the same sound can mean anything from a joyful »May I join you?« or a slightly indignant »Was it you?« (= »Maaa?«) to an outraged »You should be ashamed!« (= »Maaaaa!«). This hilarious gem of a book stands out for its perfect pacing, meticulously planned layout, and its unexpected, smelly solution to Pig's problem. (Age: 3+)

53



Acevedo, Elizabeth (text)

The poet X

New York, NY: HarperTeen, an imprint of HarperCollinsPublishers, [2018]. – 361 p.
ISBN 978-0-06-266280-4

Mother | Daughter | School | Poetry slam |
Self-esteem | Verse novel

Xiomara Batista is noticeable: tall, curvy, and strong, the fifteen-year-old Dominican American is quick with her fists when she needs to defend her scrawny, nerdy twin brother or get rid of unwanted attention from lusty boys. However, in a family controlled by her over-pious mother, who forces her to attend mass to save her soul, the only way for Xiomara to (secretly) voice her opinions and struggles is through poems that she jots down in her leather notebook – poems about daily life, about falling in love, and about her rebellion against God. When her English teacher persuades her to join a slam poetry club, she slowly learns to trust her own voice and speak out for herself. Widely praised and decorated with several awards, »The Poet X« is an intense verse novel following the coming-of-age of a headstrong teenage girl who often feels invisible. Slam-poetry performer Elizabeth Acevedo has created a believably flawed and authentic heroine who will capture the hearts of teenage and adult readers alike. (Age: 14+)

54



Adeyemi, Tomi (text)

Children of blood and bone

New York: Henry Holt and Company,
2018. – 531 p.
ISBN 978-1-250-17097-2

West African culture | Monarchy | Racism |
Oppression | Genocide | Magic | Quest |
Fantasy fiction

Zélie and her people, the maji, live in a broken world. Over a decade before, the ruthless king of Orisha had everyone with magic powers persecuted and killed, including Zélie's mother. Since that day, the young maji offspring have been treated as second-class citizens, oppressed and ridiculed. Yet through a chance encounter, Zélie learns that she is »the chosen one« who shall bring the power of magic back. Together with her brother and princess Amari, who is on the run from her own father, she sets off on a dangerous quest, and an adventure of immeasurable dimensions begins. Inspired by her interest in the West-African Orisha deities, Tomi Adeyemi has successfully created an all-black high fantasy novel with a distinctly Nigerian flavour. It tackles challenging topics such as grief, loss, and oppression, with a love story added into the mix. Yet on a deeper level, this tome of a book is also about the experience of growing up as a person of colour in western society. This fascinating debut novel, the first in a series, has been snatched up by publishers all over the world. (Age: 12+)

55



Bowles, David (text)

They call me Güero. A border kid's poems

El Paso, Texas: Cinco Puntos Press,

[2018]. – 111 p.

ISBN 978-1-947627-07-9

Mexican American | Bilingualism | Cultural roots | Bullying | Racism | Poetry | Verse novel

Life can be difficult to navigate for someone like Güero, a Mexican American boy, growing up close to the Mexican border. A light-skinned kid (hence the Mexican nickname) with red hair and freckles, Güero is a bit of a nerd who loves chatting about his favourite books with his best friends, the three Bobbys – whom his sister has termed »los Derds«, i.e. »Diverse Nerds«. Occasionally, he gets into trouble for some mischief, he is repeatedly saved from bullies by his tough new girlfriend Joanna, and he discovers the power and fun of poetry. Using a variety of poetic forms, Güero talks about his daily life, about his family and their wider community, about rich traditions, and about everything that defines him as »a border kid, a foot on either bank.« Written in an authentic voice interspersed with many Spanish words and sentences, the heartfelt texts in David Bowles's slim volume offer captivating glimpses into the ups and downs of living in a bilingual and multicultural environment. (Age: 10+)

56



Hendrix, John (text/illus.)

The faithful spy. Dietrich Bonhoeffer and the plot to kill Hitler

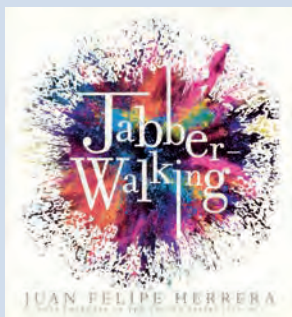
New York: Amulet Books, 2018. – 175 p.

ISBN 978-1-4197-2838-9

Bonhoeffer, Dietrich | Germany | History 1910-1945 | National socialism | Resistance | Biography | Graphic novel

After delivering »Miracle Man. The Story of Jesus« in 2016, a much-praised biography about the Son of God, award-winning illustrator John Hendrix has taken on an even more challenging cast of characters for his new book. »The Faithful Spy« is an astounding biography-cum-history book in graphic novel format, designed in just three colours: red, teal (i.e. a dark shade of green), and black. With middle graders and teenage readers as a target audience, Hendrix describes both the life of Dietrich Bonhoeffer, a young German interested in God and religion who later joins the resistance movement, and the rise to power of Adolf Hitler and his National Socialist Party in Germany in the 1930s. Spanning almost half a century, the handwritten text cogently condenses the complex issues and presents them in an interesting combination of fact and fiction. Impressive images, powerful metaphors, insightful quotes, and the juxtaposition of good and evil make this book a compelling read for all ages. (Age: 12+)

57



Herrera, Juan Felipe (text/illus.)

Jabberwalking

Somerville, Massachusetts: Candlewick Press, 2018. – 137 p.

ISBN 978-1-5362-0140-6

Poetry | Creative writing | Wordplay

This is not merely a guide to writing poetry. This is a guide to »Jabberwalking« (a term based on Lewis Carroll's famous poem »Jabberwocky«). Written by Juan Felipe Herrera, former poet laureate of the USA, the book starts out with the author taking his dog for a (jabber)walk, while explaining his method of »writing while walking« to the reader. Interspersed throughout are sketches and autobiographical anecdotes, and the layout is lively, with words varying in size and sentences scattered across the pages. This might sound like a strange mix, but on the contrary: The different elements work well together and turn the book into something unique. The author's apparent fun while writing is contagious and makes you want to start scribbling immediately. The fast pace of the text whirls you along (»Hurry!«) and invokes a feeling of impatient excitement. Herrera doesn't simply explain the term Jabberwalking in this volume, he demonstrates it. The technique is funny, messy, playful, quite personal at times, and above all liberating. (Age: 12+)

58



Higginbotham, Anastasia (text/illus.)

Not my idea. A book about whiteness

New York, NY: Dottir Press, 2018. – 64 p.

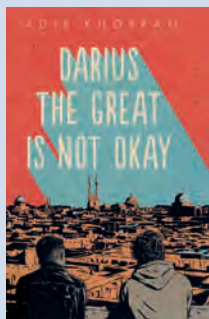
(Series: Ordinary terrible things)

ISBN 978-1-9483-4000-7

Racism | Skin colour | Whiteness | Prejudice | Civil Rights Movement

Thanks to a number of movements such as #WeNeedDiverseBooks and #OwnVoices, children today can find an increasing amount of reading material about characters of different skin colours, ethnic backgrounds, religions etc, created by non-white authors and illustrators. Many of them also address the problem of racism. However, some white parents might feel that this tough and controversial issue has nothing to do with their (small) children. In her brilliant square picture book »Not My Idea«, Anastasia Higginbotham skilfully argues and explains in a child-friendly way, why »Racism is a white person's problem and we are all caught up in it – mostly by refusing to look at it.« Using powerful collages mounted on a brown paper background, she tells the story of a young white girl who is frightened but also curious about the events happening around her. The author not only informs children about white supremacy and the oppression of people of colour, she also comforts them and encourages them to make a difference, no matter how small they are. (Age: 5+)

59



Khorram, Adib (text)

Darius the Great is not okay

New York, NY: Dial Books, [2018]. – 314 p.

ISBN 78-0-525-55296-3

Biracial family | Depression | Iran |
Grandparents | Cultural roots | Friendship

Darius Kellner – fractional Persian, Star Trek fan, tea enthusiast, and clinically depressed teenager – doesn't really fit in anywhere: He is bullied at school; his father, the »Teutonic Übermensch«, is mostly disappointed with his un-manly son; and although he has inherited distinctly Persian looks from his mother, his knowledge of Farsi or the Persian culture is minimal. Therefore, he doesn't have high hopes for the family's first trip to Iran to visit his grandmother and terminally ill grandfather. Yet then he receives a warm welcome from all his relatives in Iran, learns more about his cultural roots, and meets Sohrab, the boy next door. With him at his side, he finally feels accepted, loved, and at home just as he is. Adib Khorram's award-winning debut novel not only gives an insight into the challenges of growing up in a biracial family, it also provides an authentic portrait of a teenage boy struggling with mental illness without being defined by it. (Age: 13+)

60



Latham, Irene / Waters, Charles (text)

Qualls, Sean / Alko, Selina (illus.)

Can I touch your hair? Poems of race, mistakes, and friendship

Minneapolis: Carolrhoda Books, 2018. – 39 p.

ISBN 978-1-5124-0442-5

School | Race | Identity | Prejudice |
Everyday life | Friendship | Poetry

This small-format poetry anthology about two schoolkids is a splendid collaboration between four people. Set in the present – with a slight nod at the authors' own childhoods in the 1980s – the book tackles the timeless and universal themes of race, identity, prejudice, and friendship. When the kids' teacher pairs them up for a poetry project, neither (white) Irene nor (black) Charles is particularly happy to be thrown in this together. At first, they see nothing but their big differences, but over the course of writing poems about daily matters such as shoes, hair, church, the beach, etc., talkative Charles and introvert Irene discover that they have quite a few things in common. And they don't restrict their poems to simple issues either; controversial topics, such as prejudice and fear also creep in – as in Irene's poem »Why Aunt Sarah Doesn't Go Downtown after Dark«: »sky / black / streets / black / faces / black / fear / white«. Accompanied by atmospheric illustrations in bright, matt colours, the poems invite readers to challenge their own preconceptions. (Age: 6+)

61



Lê, Minh (text)

Santat, Dan (illus.)

Drawn together

Los Angeles; New York: Disney Hyperion,
2018. – [34] p.

ISBN 978-1-4847-6760-3

Asian American | Grandfather | Grandson |
Art | Communication | Picture book

This touching intergenerational and intercultural picture book opens with a wordless double-spread showing a young boy being dropped off at his grandfather's house. Clearly, he is not in the best of moods, because unfortunately the boy speaks only English, the grandfather only Thai. The afternoon drags on with a lot of awkward silences and uncomfortable sideways glances at the table and in front of the TV. Yet when the child unpacks his pens and paper and starts drawing a sparkling superhero with a wand, the old man grabs his own sketchbook and a pot of ink – and all of a sudden, the two discover they can create »a world beyond words« together. Minh Lê's sparse, poignant text about a grandfather and grandson who eventually relate through their love of visual storytelling leaves ample room for Dan Santat's energetic illustrations. In his cartoony pictures, Santat skilfully lets the two protagonists speak in their idiosyncratic styles and then combines the two to create a seamless new unity. A true celebration of art and love! (Age: 4+)

62



Mora, Oge (text/illus.)

Thank you, Omu!

New York: Little, Brown and Company,
2018. – [34] p.

ISBN 978-0-316-43124-8

Neighbourhood | Diversity | Cooking |
Picture book

Omu (an Igbo name meaning »queen«) lives on the top floor of a tall building in a very lively, diverse neighbourhood. She loves cooking, and the enticing scent of her thick red stew simmering on the stove travels »out the window, out the door, down the hall, toward the street, and around the block«. It smells so delicious that one by one, people come knocking on Omu's door to ask for a tiny little (or larger) portion of the wonderful dish. Generous as she is, she ladles out yummy helpings of her meal to Little Boy, Ms. Police Officer, Hot Dog Vendor, and all the others, until – oh no – nothing is left for her. Yet the next knock brings the whole community back to her door with gifts aplenty, and a joyous celebration commences. Inspired by her own grandmother's great cooking and generosity, debut artist Oge Mora has crafted a warm-hearted story of food, sharing, and the joy of friendship. Her vibrant, double-spread collage illustrations zoom in and out, providing glances of the neighbourhood as well as Omu's kitchen, and almost make readers smell the scrumptious stew. (Age: 4+)

63



Stamper, Vesper (text/illus.)

What the night sings. A novel

New York: Alfred A. Knopf, [2018]. – 266 p.
ISBN 978-1-5247-0038-6

World War II | Jews | Concentration camp |
Trauma | Liberation

Children's and young adult novels about World War II are not exactly scarce. Yet there are several points that set »What the Night Sings« apart. Most importantly: Unlike many other books, which usually finish with the end of World War II, this story begins with the liberation of the concentration camp Bergen-Belsen by British soldiers. Jewish teenage girl Gerta has barely survived all the cruelties and torture – but how is she going to go on without her beloved dad, a violist and music aficionado? What good are her dreams of becoming a famous opera singer now? Should she stay in Europe or try to escape to Palestine? Aided by her friend Lev, a Hasidic Jew from Poland, and other fellow survivors, Gerta tentatively redefines her life, one step at a time. This quietly told and powerful novel draws in readers and carefully explores the question of how you can overcome such a trauma. The sepia-coloured illustrations underscore the special atmosphere of the text while adding a metaphorical level to the story. (Age: 14+)

64



Tahe, Rose Ann / Flood, Nancy Bo (text)

Nelson, Jonathan (illus.)

First laugh. Welcome, baby!

Watertown, MA: Charlesbridge, [2018]. – [32] p.
ISBN 978-1-58089-794-5

Native Americans | Navajo <people> | Baby |
Welcome ceremony | Picture book

Seeing a young baby giggle and smile is always a joy. For Navajo people, it is more than just that: A baby's first laugh is a particularly significant moment, commemorated with a special ceremony in which the child is formally welcomed into its family and clans. In this poetic, witty, and touching picture book, Rose Ann Tahe (Diné/Navajo) and Nancy Bo Flood recount how the various members of a loving Navajo family try very hard to get a true laugh out of their little baby. Neither big brother's silly faces, nor sister's flute-playing, or Mama's song achieve more than a smile. Yet eventually, the grandparents are rewarded with a big laugh. Jonathan Nelson's (Diné/Navajo) matt illustrations created in pencil, ballpoint, and photoshop present a modern tight-knit family, their cosy city apartment, as well as modern-day life on the Navajo Nation, with many endearing, culturally specific details. An informative appendix provides details about the First Laugh Celebration and other ceremonies welcoming new babies around the world. (Age: 3+)

65



Thornhill, Samantha (text)
Clement, Morgan (illus.)

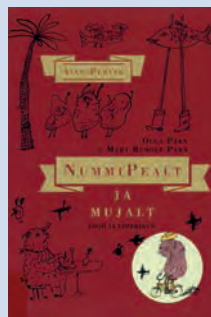
A card for my father

Oklahoma City, OK: Penny Candy Books,
[2018]. – [62] p.
ISBN 978-0-9987999-6-4

Father | Prison | School | Longing | Outsider

Penny Candy Books is a small publishing house with a growing list of hand-picked books. One of their core aims is to «... [reflect] the diverse realities of the world we live in...». Founded in 2016, their output includes imaginative picture books, exquisite poetry anthologies, such as »H Is for Haiku« and »Thirteen Ways of Looking at a Black Boy«, and stories about uncomfortable but socially relevant topics. One such book is »A Card for My Father«. Young Flora hates all the buzz about Father's Day. How is she supposed to create a special card or attend a picnic for a person she doesn't know anything about? Whenever she dares to ask her mom about her dad, she receives nothing but frowns, tears, and silence. Where is her father and why has he never visited his daughter? The touching text of this slim volume doesn't reveal that Flora's dad is in prison, yet the expressive cartoon-like illustrations eventually give a hint on the last page. This topical book provides a much-needed incentive to discuss imprisonment – but also absent fathers in general – with young readers. (Age: 6+)

66



Pervik, Aino (text)

Pärn, Olga / Pärn, Märt Rudolf (illus.)

NummiPealt ja mujalt. Lood ja limerikud

(BonnyHead and beyond. Stories and limericks)
[Tallinn]: Tänapäev, [2018]. – 74 p.
ISBN 978-9949-85-459-2

Nonsense | Character | Empathy | Short story | Poetry

Back in 2009, in her children's book »Ühes väikses veidras linnas«, Aino Pervik took readers on a tour through a city full of bizarre characters. These new stories and absurd poems about the genteel inhabitants of NummiPealt (BonnyHead) introduce a novel cast of quirky characters. With irony, wit, and a feel for the comic, Pervik deftly presents Mr. Aunt and Ms. Uncle; Mr. AbsentMind and his moments of forgetfulness; and Ms. WideEyed, who believes everything she sees and is told – for instance, that drinking petrol makes you faster. Aino Pervik fleshes out the odd crew with wordplay, a laconic tone, and gentle warmth, showing yet again why she is one of Estonia's most relevant children's literary voices. Olga Pärn (b. 1976) and her son Märt Rudolf match Pervik's lovely text and idiosyncratic protagonists with awkwardly funny pictures that are a lot of fun. (Age: 8+)

67



Saar, Anti (text)
Ring, Anna (illus.)
Seisa siin, Pärt!
(Wait here, Pärt!)

[Saue]: Päike ja Pilv, 2018. – [26] p.
ISBN 978-9949-7224-0-2

Inner voice | Insecurity | Everyday life

A little boy has been endearing himself to Estonians since 2017: Pärt. Appearing in five stories so far, the seven-year-old always gets himself into slightly uncomfortable situations. Pärt is a shy and thoughtful boy, and his inner voice tends to trip him up. This time it happens at the grocery: Pärt is waiting in the cashier's line with his Papa, when his father remembers that he still needs flour. Pärt stays in the line and is mighty proud to be standing all alone with the groceries. But then his thoughts start jostling about: Why is Papa taking so long? Does he need help with selecting the flour? What happens if the line moves quickly and we're up next? With much understanding and humour, Anti Saar (b. 1980) and illustrator Anna Ring (b.1992) have crafted a wonderful children's book character, whose thoughts and fears are all too relatable. It's impossible not to like Pärt! (Age: 6+)

68



Evasco, Eugene Y. (text)
Yokte, Jared C. (illus.)
Suarez, Angelo V. (transl.)

Ang aklatang Pusa = The cat library

Quezon City: CANVAS (The Center for Art, New Ventures and Sustainable Development), 2018. – 35 p.
(Series: CANVAS Stories) – ISBN 978-971-9689-09-6
Text Filipino and English

Library | Stray cat | Animal welfare |
Minority group | Picture book | Bilingual book

Retired librarian Ms Salvacion takes all the cats abandoned in her dark backyard and opens a »cat library«. She catalogues the animals according to their personality and talent and then lends them to just the right people who need comfort or inspiration. With his book, distinguished author Eugene Evasco wants to raise awareness not only for animal rights, but also for marginalised population groups. The story was inspired by »The Human Library«[®], an NGO created in Copenhagen in 2000, in which human beings from different social and ethnic backgrounds can be »borrowed«[®] for conversation. Evasco likes to challenge his readers with excellent stories written in a literary style, instead of simplifying them. The enigmatic illustrations by Jared Yokte, in which people hardly differ from cats, provide another challenge for young readers. This book was the winner of the »Romeo Forbes Story Writing Competition 2018«[®] by the non-profit organization CANVAS, which promotes Philippine art and culture, as well as literacy among children. (Age: 8+)

ESTONIAN
FILIPINO

Estonia
Philippines

69



Erkkintalo, Jenni (text/illus.)

Mato ja meri

(Mato and the sea)

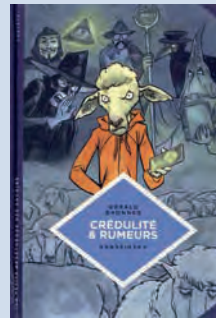
Helsinki: Etana Editions, [2019]. – [44] p.

ISBN 978-952-7105-37-5

Sea | Longing | Greed | Megalomania |
Protection of nature | Environmental protection |
Picture book

Mato the earthworm, a perky sailor's cap on his head, crawls up a rock and gazes longingly at the sea. He spots that the tide has brought in a bottle with a call for help! The worm doesn't miss a beat and heads to sea, first in a rubber dinghy, then in an open motor boat, and then in a yacht. His boats become bigger and faster, and Mato, caught up in the thrill of speeding across the water, can't quite recall why he actually set out to sea in the first place. He remains caught in the »higher, faster, farther« momentum until he hits upon the fish who called for help – help to demonstrate against all the big boats speeding about. By means of its colourful print- and retro-aesthetic and »wormy« hero, »Mato ja meri« raises awareness about the need to protect nature and the environment. It offers an alternative critique of capitalism. (Age: 3+)

70



Bronner, G rald (text) / Krassinsky (illus.)

Cr dulit  et rumeurs. Faire face aux th ories du complot et aux fake news

(Gullibility and rumours. How to critically handle conspiracy theories and fake news)

Bruxelles: Les  ditions du Lombard, [2019]. – 71 p.

(Series: La petite b d th que des savoirs; 24)

ISBN 978-2-8036-7245-5

Fake News | Media | Critical thinking |
Manipulation | Graphic novel | Non-fiction

Achille, a young »anti-vaxxer«, and his (invisible) alter ego discuss how to arrive at »truth« in the age of the Internet and social media. They consider dangerous deception manoeuvres prevalent on the Internet and what political consequences they could have. This ambitious volume in the series »La petite B d th que des savoirs« (The little comics library of knowledge) by Belgian publisher Les  ditions du Lombard succeeds in being both a profound and funny comics-novella and a well-written introduction to the complex topic of modern propaganda techniques and conspiracy theories. The French sociologist G rald Bronner shows how political »disinformation« functions, using many historical examples. Illustrator and manga-artist Krassinsky adds short comics to this, which show how one can apply critical thinking to protect oneself against the targeted spread of false information. (Age: 13+)



71

Ramos, Mario (text/illus.)

Histoires de loups

(*Wolf stories*)

Bruxelles, Paris: Pastel, [2018]. – 157 p.

(Series: Pastel)

ISBN 978-2-211-23668-3

Wolf | Fairy-tale character

The wolf remains the favourite fairy-tale animal of many a reader. Even the early-deceased illustrator Mario Ramos (1958–2012) had a weakness for the ambivalent fairy-tale figure, giving the wolf a special place in his »contes détournés« (fairy-tale parodies). The best appearances made by Ramos's anthropomorphized wolf are as a vain braggard and a farcical scaredy-cat. Armed with careful preparation and the worst intentions, he nonetheless is defeated by his weaker opponents. He manages to aggressively berate a tiny green dragon – a moment of triumph – only to have the (terrifying) dragon-mama appear. In this superb volume, Belgian publisher Pastel collects Ramos's five most beautiful wolf stories for the first time, sparing no effort in terms of book design and production. A personal foreword from illustrator Andrea Nève Ramos, the widow of Mario Ramos, completes the book, whose entire composition is on point, right down to the last detail. (Age: 3+)



72

Tardi (text/illus.) / Ruault, Jean-Luc (colouring)

Moi René Tardi, prisonnier au Stalag IIB.

Après la guerre

(*I René Tardi, prisoner in Stalag IIB. After the war*)

[Bruxelles]: Casterman, [2018]. – 158 p.

(Series: Moi René Tardi, prisonnier au Stalag IIB; 3)

ISBN 978-2-203-09724-7

World War II | History 1939-1952 | Soldier | Prisoner of war | Post-war era | Father | Son | Peace | Graphic novel

In 1940, René Tardi, father of comic author Tardi, was a young soldier, who entered German imprisonment and barely survived his time in »Stammlager« (Stalag) IIB, a prisoner-of-war camp. Tardi processes his father's traumatic memories in this personal trilogy, which (in volumes 1 and 2) superbly treats the complex relationship between Germany and France from the perspective of a French prisoner of war. The third volume portrays, among other things, the return of René Tardi to Germany as a regular soldier in 1951/52, this time as an occupier and with his family. Tardi writes himself into the whole trilogy as a (fictional) boy – an exceptionally successful device. The child accompanies his father – critically as well as empathically – through even his darkest hours. The vivacious boy becomes the narrator in the third volume, which describes with subtle irony the bizarre everyday life and contradictions of post-war Germany and France from a child's perspective. (Age: 12+)

73



Barbeau-Lavalette, Anaïs (text)
Cinq-Mars, Mathilde (illus.)

Nos héroïnes

(Our female heroes)

[Montréal, Québec]: Éditions Marchand de feuilles, [2018]. – 87 p. + 7 p.
ISBN 978-2-923896-90-8.

Canada / Québec | Woman | Culture |
Politics | History 16th - 20th century | Role
model | Biography | Non-fiction

Women make history. But how would history have gone if it had been even more strongly shaped by women and ordered according to their interests and standards? Many books on historical themes – also in children's and young adult literature – wrongfully neglect the fact that women, too, are protagonists in important social, cultural, and political changes and conflicts. There are ways to show this! Anaïs Barbeau searched Canadian history for 40 great women and their legacies, presenting the results in this young-adult book from small-scale publisher Marchand de Feuilles. The only point of critique: The book's selection unfortunately favours white middle-class female role models. Some female representatives of the First Nations and Black communities, as well as representatives of other social classes are considered, but this list could surely be expanded. (Age: 9+)

74



Picard, Valérie (text)
Williams, Daniel Jamie (illus.)

La crème glacée fond plus vite en enfer

(Ice cream melts faster in Hell)

Montréal (Québec): Monsieur Ed, [2018]. – [48] p.
ISBN 978-2-924663-05-9

Hell | Fear | Ghost | Monster | Picture book

Ever since Sam became a ghost, he views life differently. He is pretty content spending his days with his friend Tom, as the two try out fancy, delightfully disgusting ice cream flavours – with or without leech topping. True, he lives in a place with a very bad reputation: Hell. However, the abode of the damned is in fact a cheerful living room full of monsters and demons – Hell's somewhat spaced-out denizens. Satan's red eyes cast a constant glow in the background, but the two friends don't seem bothered. For Sam, being in Hell turns out to be a welcome and relaxing alternative to life on Earth, which was an experience defined by fear, eccentric phobias and, most of all, by boredom. The illustrations and story-telling boldly capture the grotesque. The Picard/Williams duo has successfully crafted an amusing gem of a picture book on carefree living in the after-life. (Age: 7+)



75

St-Jean, Annie (ed.)

SlamOutaouais. 10 ans de parole

(*Slam from Outaouais. 10 years of spoken word*)

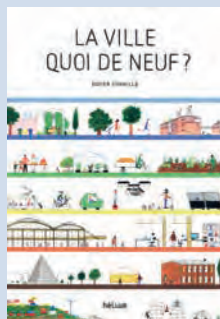
Gatineau, Québec: Vents d'Ouest, [2018]. – 261 p.

(Series: Ado; 119)

ISBN 978-2-89537-460-2

Poetry slam | Poetry | Anthology

When poems are »slammed« in the Canadian province of Québec, hundreds of young listeners come to this modern poets' competition. This is the case not only in Québec's large cities, but also in its smaller cities such as Outaouais, in the south-western region of the province. Writers have been meeting there since the 1990s, appearing publicly in audience-oriented and theatrically-staged »slam performances« to qualify for both regional and national championships. In this notable anthology, artist and slam performer Annie St-Jean curates the best texts from Outaouais region slams since 2007. Competitive aspects are often foregrounded at the live performances, so this volume showcases the attractive mix of mastery of language, poetry, and rhetoric, as well as the social relevance, that characterize the spoken word texts of this young literary genre. (Age: 15+)



76

Cornille, Didier (text/illus.)

La ville quoi de neuf?

(*What's new with cities?*)

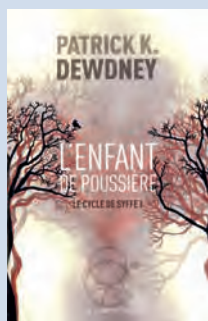
[Paris]: Hélicium, [2018]. – 83 p.

ISBN 978-2-330-10685-0

City | Urban life | Architecture | Traffic | Culture | Ecology | Non-fiction

Today, half of all human beings live in cities; by 2050, four out of five of us will live in urban environments. This cutting-edge non-fiction book from the publisher Hélicium delivers information on the following questions: How can cities better include their citizens in decision-making processes? How can they grow more sustainably? How can areas such as transport, traffic, habitation, work, leisure and culture be thought of in new ways and made accessible to all? Well-known designer Didier Cornille presents neatly-organized double-pages showing the challenges cities face from over-use, pollution, and wasting earth, air and water, for instance. At the same time, he approaches these topics with a strong fascination for the dynamism, history, and development of individual cities. The book is also solution-oriented. For instance, it provides examples of cities from all continents that are showing how things can be done differently! (Age: 8+)

77



Dewdney, Patrick K. (text)
Etienne-Arthur, Fanny (illus.)

L'enfant de poussière

(The child of dust)

Vauvert: Au diable Vauvert, [2019]. – 616 p.

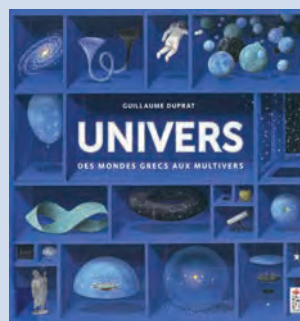
(Series: Le cycle de Syffe; 1)

ISBN 979-10-307-0121-0

Orphan | Adventure | Daydream |
Fantasy fiction

In the small city of Corne-Brune, four orphaned children grow up together on a farm: a girl named Brindille, three boys named Cardou, Merle, and Syffe, a foundling of mysterious origins. Cheeky, rebellious, and inseparable, they form a sworn fellowship. Their path seems pre-destined, but Syffe, who wants to impress pretty Brindille, is caught robbing a store. From then on, he must serve at the pleasure of Hemme, a somewhat shady gendarme. Syffe is continuously embroiled in new adventures, which take him further and further from Brindille and his friends. This extraordinary first work, the first volume in a multi-part fantasy saga, develops an impressive distinctive voice and an unmistakable poetic language. Patrick K. Dewdney's multi-layered story, awarded the Prix Pépite du Roman 2018 and the Prix Julia Verlanger 2018, astonishes readers with its psychologically-detailed scenes and complex, scintillating characters. (Age: 14+)

78



Duprat, Guillaume (text)

Univers. Des mondes Grecs aux multivers

(Universe. From Greek world-conceptions to the multiverse)

Paris: Saltimbanque éditions, [2018]. – 47 p.

ISBN 978-2-37801-007-2

Universe | Outer space | Research | Mythology |
Non-fiction

What shape does the universe have? Is it round, angular, a disk, or honeycombed? What celestial bodies populate it? Is there just one universe, or more? Every culture, every people formulates its own representations of the universe and expresses these in many areas (mythology, religion, art, literature, philosophy, astronomy, and astrology). Natural-scientific research also pursued new leads across the centuries, in the attempt to represent the universe or to explain it, and thereby also to define the interrelationship of its basic categories (space, time, matter, and energy). In this extraordinarily beautiful and informative book for all ages, French cosmology expert and children's book author Guillaume Duprat addresses his heterogeneous readership by drawing on both his knowledge and playfulness. The cleverly constructed flaps readers can lift are a special visual treat, revealing supplementary texts and illustrations underneath. (Age: 6+)



79

Elmour, Salah (text/illus.)
Chèvre, Mathilde (transl.)

Le train = Al-Qīṭar

(The train)

Marseille: Le port a jauni, [2019]. – [20] p.

(Series: À double sens)

ISBN 978-2-919511-50-1

Text French and Arabic

[Dream](#) | [Trip](#) | [Train](#) | [Train station](#) | [Adventure](#) |
[Bilingual book](#) | [Picture book](#)

What is dream, what is reality? Sudanese artist Salah Elmour places these questions at the centre of his mysterious book »The train«. They hang in the air until the last sentence of the story, while elements of dream and reality artfully intermingle throughout: Has little Mansour's highly anticipated (first) train ride to his grandmother's on the Sudanese-Egyptian border actually begun? Or are we seeing its fantastical realization in a dream? At every one of the five train stations the train passes through and along the way, Mansour spots grotesque, surreal forms, including giant fantasy birds, mysterious bird riders, and a speaking salamander. In this wonderfully enigmatic picture book, the representation of dream creatures and the unusual colour palette of black-silver-blue are inspired by ancient Sudanese-Egyptian pictorial traditions. (Age: 5+)



80

Giuliani, Emma (text/illus.)

Au jardin

(In the garden)

Paris: Editions des Grandes personnes,
[2018]. – [16] p.

ISBN 978-2-36193-539-9

[Garden](#) | [Gardening](#) | [Seasons](#) | [Annual cycle](#) |
[Picture book](#)

This large-format, carefully-composed picture book by Emma Giuliani invites readers into a garden that will inspire even nature-deprived city kids to see the appeal of puttering about the garden. They will stop thinking of gardening as boring drudgery and experience it enthusiastically and with all their senses. In the book, a girl named Prune and her brother Robin work in their garden, in harmony with nature's cycles. They rake, plant, sow, water, and – what they love most – harvest. In passing, illustrator and graphic designer Emma Giuliani transmits the ABCs of gardening and offers a first introduction to botany with this attractive lift-the-flap book. A special innovation consists in depicting the protagonists as silhouettes, who stand out visually from the colourful garden scenes. Through this clever aesthetic technique, non-white readers may feel especially drawn in. (Age: 6+)

81



Meurisse, Catherine (text/illus.)

Merlet, Isabelle (colouring)

Les grands espaces

(Vast spaces)

Paris [et al.]: Dargaud, 2018. – 90 p.

ISBN 978-2-205-07450-5

Rural life | Art | Drawing | Observation of nature | Environmental awareness | Autobiography | Graphic novel

In 1987, Catherine Meurisse and her family move to a little French village, where her parents transform a dilapidated farm into a paradise, a lifelong »place of power« for their two daughters. Catherine begins to draw at an early age. Much later, in 2015, she survives the terrorist attack on the editorial office of the satirical paper »Charlie Hebdo«, where she had been working as an illustrator for more than a decade, due to a lucky coincidence. Her wonderful graphic novel »La légèreté« (2016) is the first part of her processing of this traumatic experience and her way back to life and drawing. »Les grands espaces« dwells in a time long before the attack, a flashback to seven-year-old Catherine's childhood in Aquitaine. Critically, but also lovingly, she describes the grave problems faced by rural regions, problems triggered by land consolidation, conventional farming, and tourism, among others. With a feel for situational comedy, she reconsiders the source of her self-assurance: Where do I come from? What do literature and art mean to me? Can my art »save« me? (Age: 12+)

82



Nessmann, Philippe (text)

Dupond, Léonard (illus.)

Éternité. Demain, tous immortels?

(Eternity. Will we be immortal tomorrow?)

Paris: De la Martinière Jeunesse, [2018]. – 88 p.

ISBN 978-2-7324-8742-7

Time | Age | Life | Death | Immortality | Eternity | Time measurement | Future | Non-fiction

For millennia, human beings have dreamt of immortality. Is the fulfilment of that dream now close at hand? Will new discoveries and techniques lead to eternal, paradisiacal circumstances or rather to the amplification of human shortcomings and a never-ending »hell on Earth«? What does life mean, and how does it relate to death? What is the meaning of morality in the lives of all creatures? Which fears and illusions hide behind our longing for immortality, expressed by all peoples across all cultures? Well-known science journalist Philippe Nessmann teams up with illustrator Leonard Dupond to create an exceptionally well-made work on the topic of »eternity«, which stands as an exemplar for the outstanding non-fiction book tradition of De la Martinière Press. This book is a timely interdisciplinary invitation to pre-teens, young adults, and adults to unflinchingly consider questions of life and death. (Age: 9+)



83

Simard, Éric (text)

Au ghetto de Varsovie nous avons combattu avec Marek Edelman (*In the Warsaw Ghetto we fought together with Marek Edelman*)

Paris: Oskar éditeur, 2018. – 66 p.

(Series: Histoire et société)

ISBN 979-10-214-0627-8

World War II | Warsaw Ghetto | Uprising | History 1943 | Heroism | Edelman, Marek <1919-2009> | Non-fiction

What makes someone a »hero«? How does a hero act in »real life«? A hero is perhaps someone like Marek Edelman, who always declined the title. At only 24 years of age, Edelman was one of the strategists of the 1943 Warsaw Ghetto Uprising. The uprising failed, but as the greatest Jewish act of resistance against fascist German occupiers in Europe, it had an enormous political and symbolic impact. Edelman was one of the few who survived, and the story of his escape became legend. After the war, he worked as a doctor and remained politically active and independent, proving himself to be an uncomfortable presence for the respective political rulers of Poland. Edelman died in 2009. In this volume, Éric Simard gathers voices from the Warsaw Ghetto, people who were Marek Edelman's allies, friends, and acquaintances. They recall their shared struggle and youth-time hopes and describe this generous human being who showed determination when it mattered most. (Age: 10+)



84

Ziegler, Jean (text)

Le capitalisme expliqué à ma petite-fille (en espérant qu'elle en verra la fin)

(*Explaining capitalism to my granddaughter, in the hope that she will experience its end*)

Paris: Éditions du Seuil, [2018]. – 114 p.

(Series: Expliqué à ...)

ISBN 978-2-02-139722-2

Economy | Capitalism | Justice | Grandfather | Granddaughter | Non-fiction

The series »Expliqué à ...« already contains his well-known book on world hunger. In this volume, sociologist and long-time UN-advisor Jean Ziegler talks with his granddaughter about the historical, that is to say, finite character of capitalism. The core of the conversation revolves around the question of whether the globally-dominating societal form of capitalism (like all earlier forms) can be, or must be, outgrown, and if so, why that is. His granddaughter Zohra tackles the topic and poses uncomfortable questions to her grandfather, without necessarily comprehending his political analyses. Ziegler gives a clever introduction into the historical achievements, basic contradictions (inequality, environmental destruction, hunger, poverty, war), and fatal deficits of this »world order«, which threatens the survival of life on Earth – for the sake of maximizing profit. The book inspires critical thinking and responsible action. It thus serves as a successful critique of globalization and wake-up call to teenage and adult readers alike. (Age: 14+)

85



DWA (text/illus.)

Back to Al Bak*(Back to Al Bak)*

Saint-Denis (Réunion): Des bulles dans l'océan, 2018. – 144 p.

ISBN 978-2-919069-53-8

Childhood memories | Drawing | Artist |
City life | Rural life | Autobiography

For the first time in 27 years, Malagasy illustrator DWA, who lives in Madagascar's capital city of Antananarivo, visits his place of birth, Alatsinainy Bakaro (or Al Bak for short). Despite its geographic proximity, Al Bak is light years away from the metropolis both culturally and economically. DWA's keeps his nostalgia and sorrow at bay by »retrodrawing« himself into childhood haunts and drawing the local life of itinerant merchants, basket weavers, blacksmiths, and others in momentary snapshots. Most importantly, he draws »live«, surrounded by a cluster of children whose questions he responds to. This volume, a successful mix of diary, artist book, and comic, delivers a practical answer to the provocative question of whether drawing or art is »work«, giving insight into the drawer's daily life and artistic practice: a constant schooling of perception and regular practice outdoors and in the studio are needed to start drawing with apparent ease. (Age: 13+)

86



Andersen, Hans Christian (text)

Albertine (adapt./illus.)

Le roi nu*(The naked king)*

Genève: La Joie de Lire, 2018. – 34 p.

ISBN 978-2-88908-421-0

Vanity | Fashion | Cunning | Fairy tale |
Picture book

There once was a king who sunk all of his time and money not into affairs of state, but into... fancy clothes! With satirical twist and unbridled lust for invention – in the best tradition of the »ligne claire« – award-winning Swiss illustrator Albertine's picture book delivers a subtle version of the famous Andersen fairy-tale, »The Emperor's New Clothes«. A child breaks the spell the adults are under and speaks the obvious truth out loud: The king, who pompously puts himself in the spotlight, is a not only human, he is – worse still – a (naked) dreamer, who lives in an alternate world that has nothing to do with the realities of his subjects. With gentle irony, Albertine unveils the monarch to be an eccentric fashion nut who – if things went his way – would rule from the runway rather than from the throne. In a captivating way, Albertine interprets this subversive fairy-tale as a masterpiece on the topic of manipulation and effective resistance. (Age: 5+)



87

Hilal, Jadd (text)
Des ailes au loin

(*Wings, far away*)

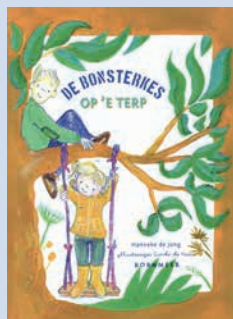
Tunis: Elyzad, [2018]. – 213 p.

(Series: Collection »Littérature«)

ISBN 978-9973-58-101-3

Middle East | Escape | Exile | Woman |
 Gender role | Emancipation

Naïma, Ema, Dara, and Lila are four multi-generational Palestinian women from the same family. They offer very different perspectives on the family saga spanning 1930 to 2000, with its cycle of flight from home, new beginnings, nostalgia for home, renewed escape and new beginnings, which lead the family to other Arabic countries (Lebanon and Syria) and to Europe. In each of their lives, disputes concerning their right to assert their own, »female« freedom – through professional and personal self-determination, also on the home front – play a significant role. With humour and much empathy, young Lebanese-Palestinian author Jadd Hilal describes the not-always-successful strategies the women deployed against violent fathers or paternalizing husbands and their attempts to determine the women's lives. In his impressive first work, which received the Grand prix du roman métis 2018 and the Prix du Roman Métis des lycéens 2018, Hilal paints a realistic panorama of Palestinian women and girl characters. (Age: 15+)



88

Jong, Hanneke de (text)

Haan, Linda de (illus.)

De Bonsterkes op 'e terp

(*The Bonsma family in the village*)

[Gorredijk]: Bornmeer, 2018. – 62 p.

ISBN 978-90-5615-474-5

Moving | Village | Family | Friendship

Nine and Joery Bonsma and their parents move from the city to a little village. Since they are going to live next door to their grandparents, one of the neighbours remarks: Now we have all the »Bonsterkes« (the Bonsmas) in our village. In twelve short chapters, the author chronicles the adventures of Nine and Joery. The stories are about ordinary things: the children go to a new school, and after a few days they already have new friends. They also visit a farm house for children, celebrate Nine's birthday, and when relatives come to visit the family, they show them »their« village. Although the story takes place in a typical Frisian village, life is not traditionally »Frisian« there anymore. The children don't have traditional Frisian names, for instance. Life is full of diverse and sometimes conflicting experiences: Nine receives a clichéd nog doll for her birthday, while Joery's new friend is black and the children's grandmother is Italian. The episodes are told in a vivid way, with natural-feeling dialogue. The light-hearted, expressive, and colourful illustrations pair perfectly with the words of the story. (Age: 4+)

FRENCH
 FRISIAN

Tunisia
 Netherlands

89



Fabsits, Tanja (text)

Der Goldfisch ist unschuldig*(The goldfish is innocent)*

Innsbruck [et al.]: Tyrolia, 2018. – 169 p.

ISBN 978-3-7022-3699-1

Friendship | Family | Father | Depression | Christmas

»Today, I almost became a murderer.« That's not a bad way of starting a children's novel! The almost-murderer is called Henri, and he is rather angry: in particular with his Dad, who only lounges on the sofa these days and does nothing that a proper Dad is supposed to do. The only thing he actually does is gape at Goldie, the goldfish; so Henri hurls the fish through the window. Luckily enough, the consequences aren't lethal for Goldie, and this fit of rage has Henri get to know Signore Montesanto a little better. Since the atmosphere at home is just as uncomfortable as the one at school, where mean »Maximator« makes Henri's life hell, the boy starts visiting the old man regularly. Henri and the Signore become friends and soon start scheming to get Henri's Dad back on his feet. Tanja Fabsits has written a warm-hearted, dialogue-centred children's novel with a strong plot. It strikes exactly the right tone and talks about friendship, imagination, building up strength, and staying strong. What a fabulous debut! (Age: 10+)

90



Minelli, Michèle (text)

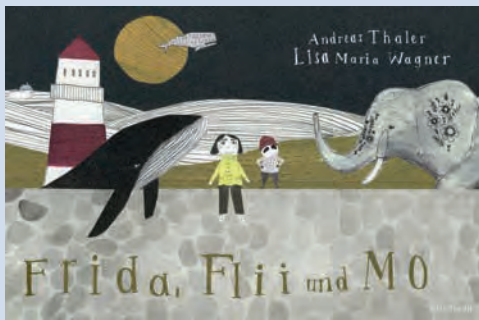
Passiert es heute? Passiert es jetzt?*(Will it happen today? Will it happen now?)*

Wien: Jungbrunnen, 2018. – 173 p.

ISBN 978-3-7026-5927-1

Father | Emotional abuse | Tyrant | Self-defence | Psychiatric clinic

How can you stand a father who torments his own family; who monitors, humiliates, and insults his wife, son, and daughter; who dominates and manipulates them; who forbids everything; who hits the roof about trivialities, while at the same time trying to uphold the appearance of a perfect family? The answer is: you can't. In Michèle Minelli's novel »Passiert es heute? Passiert es jetzt?« (Will it happen today? Will it happen now?), the author has her fifteen-year-old protagonist Wolfgang talk about the goings-on in his family bullied by a tyrant. During conversations with his therapists inside the adolescent psychiatric ward, isolated episodes are put together to create a shocking picture. Even though Wolfgang is deeply disturbed, his narrative is astonishingly well-worded, an aspect that doesn't seem entirely convincing. Despite this, the book is an intense novel that sheds light on power abuse, psychological blackmail, and horror. (Age: 14+)



91

Thaler, Andreas (text)
Wagner, Lisa Maria (illus.)

Frida, Flii und Mo

(Frida, Flii, and Mo)

Wien: Luftschacht Verlag, 2018. – [40] p.
ISBN 978-3-903081-25-3

Prejudice | Friendship | Picture book

»... who would have thought that such a small girl, barely a metre tall, and her threadbare soft-toy-friend would be able to destroy an entire wall?« No one indeed; and yet, this is exactly what happened. Frida and her friends Flii and Mo bring down the wall that has surrounded the city for years, that has prevented curiosity and departure, that has planted fear in people's heads. No wonder the city is grey and dark. Yet, when the three friends shoot a hole in the wall during their game of football, they discover that there is nothing terrible behind it; on the contrary: The world beyond is breezy, multi-coloured, and cheerful. This picture book, created in an unusually wide landscape format, combines collages and drawings. It makes clever use of changing perspectives and dares to create unconventional characters. Thanks to this, a classic topic in children's literature is given a new, timeless look. (Age: 4+)



92

Bach, Tamara (text)
Hämmerleinova, Petra (illus.)

Wörter mit L

(Words with L)

Hamburg: Carlsen, [2019]. – 171 p.
ISBN 978-3-551-55386-7

Friendship | Falling in love | Language | Writing

Things were just fine a minute ago, eh? Yet suddenly everything is out of whack, awry, wrong. The moment that Pauline's best friend Natascha falls in love, boys and romance are the only things that matter to her. Pauline feels left behind, the hype about boys confuses her, and she is sad and angry that she ceases to exist for Natascha. Yet she's not that easily defeated. Her new »old« typewriter acts as one of her life savers, because Pauline is a word aficionado. She likes the sound of words, she loves studying them, and she enjoys writing. Words make her happy. When she finally meets someone who is on the same wavelength (and even owns a dog!), the world takes on some new colour. Renowned as an excellent YA author, Tamara Bach has now published her first children's novel, a book that explores the sensitive time between childhood and adolescence. It's poetic, full of worldly wisdom, keenly observed, honest, and warm-hearted. A wonderful book! (Age: 10+)

93



Biermann, Franziska (text/illus.)

Jacky Marrone jagt die Goldpfote

(Jacky Marrone hunts the golden paw)

München: dtv, [2018]. – 116 p.

ISBN 978-3-423-76230-4

Fox | Chicken | Kidnapping | Detective

Told with incredible sass and illustrated in vivid cartoon-like drawings, »Jacky Marrone jagt die Goldpfote« (Jacky Marrone hunts the golden paw) consists of a firework of witty, whacky ideas, including various allusions to literary motifs, characters, and genre conventions. Jacky the fox, a private eye, is waiting for his first case – and his wait is over soon: an old little lady who introduces herself as Widow Bolte and throws down a wad of bank notes asks Jacky to bring back Aurelia, her golden chicken. Aurelia is very dear to the widow's heart, and to her household budget, because the golden chicken's special eggs provide the lady with bread and butter (and a formidable mansion) – which is why the hen is of interest to all sorts of scoundrels. Jacky, both canny and courageous, leaves no stone unturned and employs even the most outlandish tricks of the detective trade to find Aurelia. Will he be successful? (Age: 7+)

94



Bücker, Jutta (text/illus.)

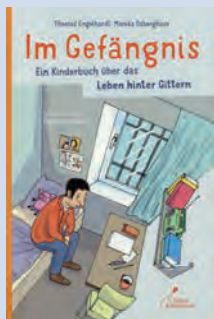
Zorilla

Mannheim: Kunstanstifter, 2019. – [36] p.

ISBN 978-3-942795-71-5

Outsider | Prejudice | Rumour | Xenophobia | Picture book

Zorilla, the marten, is an outsider. He is fairly new to town. The other inhabitants watch him with suspicion that soon turns into outright hostility. Rumours abound: What is it exactly that this Zorilla does? He walks the streets at night collecting glass; he buys screws and nails. The town people indulge in the most horrendous speculations – until one day they can't take it anymore. They simply have to see what's going on. However, when they arrive at Zorilla's workshop, he has disappeared. He has built himself a huge ship-in-a-bottle to cruise around the world. No malicious intent whatsoever; instead it is wanderlust, eagerness to explore, and a general longing that carry him away. Jutta Bucker tells this story about xenophobia in expressive pictures that deliberately set readers on the wrong track, because Zorilla is not depicted as the classic hero for whom readers feel sympathy. Thus, (many adults') expectations are challenged and the readers' prejudices revealed. Cleverly done! (Age: 6+)



95

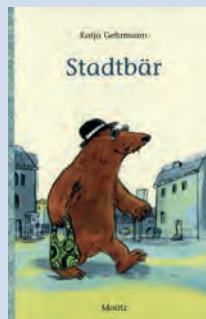
Engelhardt, Thomas / Osberghaus, Monika (text)
Hesselbarth, Susann (illus.)

Im Gefängnis. Ein Kinderbuch über das Leben hinter Gittern

(In prison. A children's book about life behind bars)
[Leipzig]: Klett Kinderbuch, 2018. – 92 p.
ISBN 978-3-95470-186-5

Prison | Father | Daughter

The first chapter of this book is entitled »The unknown place«. Which is true: Everyone is aware that prisons exist, but most people only know what they look like inside from crime series on TV: how inmates live, and, more importantly, what it means for family and friends when a beloved person is incarcerated. Therefore, this book closes an important gap. It tells the story of Sina, whose Dad Robert serves time. Not only does it illuminate all aspects of imprisonment, it is also told from various perspectives – what a sharp move. In addition to descriptive passages, readers will find texts told from Sina's and Robert's points of view, e.g. in their letters. The book's tone is straightforward, not condescending, and above all authentic, because the author addresses fear, embarrassment, anger, frustration as well as the many areas of conflict and the huge challenges faced by inmates as well as their family and friends. (Age: 8+)



96

Gehrmann, Katja (text/illus.)

Stadtbär

(City Bear)

Frankfurt am Main: Moritz Verlag, 2019 – 93 p.
(Series: Ein Moritz Kinderbuch)
ISBN 978-3-89565-376-6

Wild animals | City | Nature | Culture

When Bear wakes from hibernation, all the animals have disappeared. What has happened? Where have they gone? Well, they have moved to the city. It seems to be more comfortable there, food just appears in front of you, so to speak, and what's even better: There are no hunters. Fox, Badger, and Beaver agree on this. And they also agree that Bear won't be able to live in the city; after all, people are afraid of bears. Nevertheless, Bear still decides to go for a stroll, with floppy hat and shopping bag as his disguise, and gets himself into some precarious situations. Luckily enough, Fox, Badger, and Beaver are sharp as tacks, and so everything ends well. In this intelligent and witty children's novel, Katja Gehrmann leaves subtle trails in text and pictures, thus creating several Eureka moments for both people and animals. In passing, she also touches upon the ambivalent relationship between these two groups, as well as the related issue of »nature vs. culture«. (Age: 6+)

97



Gmehling, Will (text)

Freibad. Ein ganzer Sommer unter dem Himmel

(Outdoor swimming pool. A whole summer beneath the sky)

Wuppertal: Peter Hammer Verlag, [2019]. – 155 p.
ISBN 978-3-7795-0608-9

Summer | Swimming pool | Growing up

Katinka's plan is to complete 20 laps of the crawl, Robbie is supposed to learn how to swim properly, and Alf wants to jump off the 10-metre diving platform – these are the goals for this summer. Thanks to a free ticket, the Bukowski-children – cheeky and fearless Katinka, contemplative and cautious Alf, and the youngest sibling, quiet and dreamy Robbie – spend every day at the public outdoor swimming pool, no matter whether it rains or the sun blazes down from the sky. A holiday trip is impossible anyway, because the Bukowskis need to scrimp and save. However, at the pool, this unique place smelling of chips, chlorine, and sunscreen, the three siblings challenge their limits and, sometimes quietly as mice, sometimes with great fuss, excel themselves. Alf, who tells the story, is a sensitive observer with a subtle sense of humour and a big heart that gets considerably out of sync during this particular outdoor-pool-summer... (Age: 8+)

98



Goldberg-Kuznetsova, Luba (text)

Lubotschka

Berlin: Aufbau, 2019. – 214 p.
ISBN 978-3-351-03763-5

St. Petersburg | Coming of age

Lubotschka is eighteen and oscillates between the-world-is-my-oyster and melancholy, between posing and searching for the meaning of life. Just like the city in which she lives and which she is soon going to leave for Germany, Lubotschka is full of surprises. In this novel, St. Petersburg is more than just a backdrop, because the young woman does not simply amble through the city; instead, she soaks it up and can tell stories about memorials and department stores as well as the »kommunalka«, the communal apartment typical for Russia. Simply put: St. Petersburg is part of Lubotschka's DNA. Therefore, the book does not merely portray a girl's coming-of-age, but also a city in transition. The story is set during the turn of the millennium, a time when St. Petersburg was home to sassy adolescents as well as nostalgic old folks, to impoverished grannies as well as newly-rich tossers. (Age: 16+)



99 Daniel Höra

Höra, Daniel (text)

Was wir nicht wollten. Eine (fast) wahre Geschichte

(What we didn't want. An [almost] true story)

Berlin: Ueberreuter Verlag, 2018. – 253 p.

ISBN 978-3-7641-7086-8

Kidnapping | Disability | Group dynamics | Disinhibition

What are you supposed to do when a situation escalates? When things get worse and worse and take a direction you neither foresaw nor planned. This is what happens to Koko, Tomi, Betty, Scholle, and Spargel. When Bobbo's Mum snitches on them for a trifle, they decide to take revenge: They plan to kidnap Bobbo, who, due to an accident, has a mental disability, in order to give his mother a nasty shock. However, Heiner, the estate's bully, witnesses their act and in turn blackmails them. As soon as everything gets out of control, the once tight group disintegrates into wobbly alliances and a dog-eat-dog behaviour. There is guilt and fear on one side, but also the fascination of power and bullying on the other. Using Spargel as the narrator, Daniel Höra has created a meticulous observer who captures interpersonal dynamics as well as the motives of each person. (Age: 14+)



100

Konrad, Bob (text)

Kohl, Daniela (illus.)

Der Knäckebrotkrach. Bei Oma und Opa fliegen die Fetzen

(The crispbread fight. Sparks fly at Grandma and Grandpa's)

Würzburg: Arena, 2019. – 93 p.

ISBN 978-3-401-60307-0

Fight | Trifle | Escalation | Reconciliation

The question whether to butter the smooth or the rough side of crispbread has Grandma and Grandpa start bickering and arguing. Sparks are flying – not only at the kitchen table. Soon the molehill becomes a mountain and the whole village is divided. Whereas the men side with Grandpa, the women support Grandma. Everyone comes up with increasingly absurd plans to score against the other side. No-one seems to notice that the matter is getting completely out of hand, except for the granddaughter and storyteller, who wonders: This can't be true, can it? Bob Konrad and Daniela Kohl show how a mere trifle can grow into a huge conflict. Written as a graphic novel, the story imbues an all-time favourite topic with a casualness and new momentum, while clearly shouting out: Come on, people, snap out of it! (Age: 8+)

101



Krügel, Mareike (text)

Palntag, Nele (illus.)

Zelten mit Meerschwein. Roman für Kinder*(Camping with guinea pig. Novel for children)*

Weinheim [et al.]: Beltz & Gelberg, [2018]. –

146 p. + 15 p.

ISBN 978-3-407-82352-6

School holidays | Forest | Camping | Adventure

Good things are often found right on your doorstep. When their holiday plans are thwarted, Anton and his mother, plus guinea pig Pünktchen (Little Spot), pitch their tent in the nearby forest. Far away from any campsite. This is forbidden, of course, but as long as you don't get caught... Life in the forest is brilliant. Anton doesn't have to wash, he can watch the stars at night holding Pünktchen in his arms, and he can do whatever he feels like. Though Anton is a rather cautious fellow, he ventures deeper and deeper into the forest, where, one day, he encounters grim-faced Liane. After his initial shock-induced paralysis and her disdain, the two children slowly become friends. Since the girl is a true amazon, the holidays are further improving, despite – or because of – the fact that a few unexpected and really exciting things happen. »Zelten mit Meerschwein« (Camping with guinea pig) is a summer read, a skilfully told children's novel about the happiness of small things, friendship, and freedom. (Age: 10+)

102



Michaelis, Antonia (text)

Tankstellenchips. Ein Heldenepos*(Petrol station chips. A hero's epic)*

Hamburg: Verlag Friedrich Oetinger, [2018]. – 362 p.

ISBN 978-3-7891-0918-8

Germany | Myth | History | Journey

A mismatched couple of underdogs sets off on a hero's journey through Germany. Their trip leads them from the north-easternmost point of Mecklenburg-West Pomerania at the coast of the Baltic Sea all the way to the Bavarian Alps. Sean, a student from Iran, and Davy, an eight-year-old boy who ran away from a children's home, are being chased by mean gangsters. They find shelter with a group of Polish strawberry pickers and capture the hearts of some voluptuous women; they search for the Nibelung treasure in the Rhine river, the most German of all rivers; they meet the Bavarian »Kini« (King Ludwig II) at Neuschwanstein Castle, and they witness a miracle at »Wieskirche« church. »Tankstellenchips« (Petrol station chips) is a magnificently told road movie or monomyth – a parody that offers an ironic play on German myths and, at the same time, makes fun of German idiosyncrasies, customs, and behaviour. Yet even readers who have never heard of Dwarf Alberich from the Song of the Nibelungs, nor of King Ludwig II will enjoy the fast-paced, comical, and linguistically powerful novel. What a superb book! (Age: 14+)

103



Muser, Martin (text)

Kannawoniwasein! Manchmal muss man einfach verduften

(Yumusbejokin! Sometimes you simply have to vamoose)

Hamburg: Carlsen, [2018]. – 168 p.

ISBN 978-3-551-55375-1

Journey | Adventure | Berlin | Road novel

Great ideas, laid-back dialogue, and a fantastic cast of characters: This novel is the real deal. Finn, almost ten, takes the train to Berlin on his own for the first time and everything goes wrong from the start. He is being robbed, and because he doesn't have a ticket anymore, the conductor throws him off the train. Yet in his time of need, Jola appears: she is astute, fearless, and ready to take risks. Spontaneously, the two kids decide to skip the train and head towards Berlin, the »Tzitti«, on their own. The adventure starts well enough, because they discover an old tractor that Jola simply hot-wires: so they're off. However, things are never that easy; therefore, Lola and Finn have to brave policemen, country bumpkins, and rock bands. Martin Muser has created a true road novel for kids that stands out for its witty language and superb ideas – certainly partly influenced by other German children's classics such as Erich Kästner's »Emil and the Detectives« and Wolfgang Herrndorf's »Tschick«. A must-read! (Age: 10+)

104



Schützsack, Lara (text)

Sonne, Moon und Sterne

(The sun, Moon, and the stars)

Frankfurt am Main: FISCHER Sauerländer, 2019. – 238 p.

ISBN 978-3-7373-5622-0

Family | Friendship | First love |
Coming of age

Unconventional characters, the vibrating atmosphere in a big city, joy and sadness – »Sonne, Mond und Sterne« (The sun, Moon, and the stars) is a special children's novel, not least because of its protagonist: Gustav, a girl with a boy's name. Gustav will be turning twelve soon, has two bitchy older sisters, and a faithful old dog called Sand. Yet right now, everything seems jinxed. Gustav and her best friend have had a row, and her parents are in the middle of a big crisis and have therefore cancelled the holiday trip. Great prospects indeed. Yet then, on the last day of school, Moon turns up. With his sparkling star-covered leggings, he is so different from the others. With a light hand yet great depth, Lara Schützsack talks about the ups and downs of a family's chaotic life during a hot summer in Berlin, about fear and loss, and about jittery, confusingly wonderful, bubbly feelings. Gustav is a terrific girl, dauntless and smart. She knows how to savour every single moment and faces life bravely whenever necessary. (Age: 10+)

105



Tienti, Benjamin (text)

Kuhl, Anke (illus.)

Unterwegs mit Kaninchen*(On the road with Rabbit)*

Hamburg: Dressler Verlag, 2019. – 205 p.

ISBN 978-3-7915-0102-4

Journey | Adventure | Road novel

»Unterwegs mit Kaninchen« (On the road with Rabbit) is told – at least partly – from the view-point of the eponymous hero. The rabbit is called Maikel and belongs to Andrea, the boy who provides the second narrative voice. Andrea is rather introverted and not particularly fond of stress or frenzy. However, his daily life changes considerably when his father decides to take in Farah and her daughter Fidaa. Fidaa practices Taekwondo excessively and bosses Andrea around. To make matters worse, there is a little misadventure and Maikel's paw gets squashed; so the boy decides: Let's get out of this madhouse! Unfortunately, Fidaa learns about his plans, and thus two completely different personalities and an injured rabbit in a cool box hit the road heading towards Andrea's mother, who lives in the Black Forest. It's easy to imagine that there will be a few bumps on the way... Benjamin Tienti's second book once more shows the author's great skill for telling a fast-paced and profound story. (Age: 10+)

106



Gnehm, Matthias (text/illus.)

Salzhunger*(Hunger for salt)*

Zürich: Edition Moderne, 2019. – 219 p.

ISBN 978-3-03731-186-8

Nigeria | Corruption | Greed for profit |
Oil corporation | Graphic novel

Corruption, betrayal, abuse of power: In this graphic novel, set in the Niger Delta in Africa, Matthias Gnehm tells the story of unscrupulous oil corporations that don't care about human beings or nature. Their sole interest is to maximise their profit. Police officers as well as newspaper staff are known to keep their hands open and their mouths shut. Yet the fact that there is a »mole« playing a double game even among the team of investigating European journalists who are striving to expose the scandal, is particularly perfidious. The author once said in an interview that there is no topic too complex for a graphic novel. »Salzhunger« (Hunger for salt) is ample proof of this: The book is as suspenseful as a thriller not only thanks to its dramatic structure and expressive, sinister visual language, but also to its all-too-real subject matter: syndicates that stop at nothing to reach their goals, expansion at any price, and governments that show callous disregard for their citizens. (Age: 12+)

107



Janisch, Heinz (text)

Blau, Aljoscha (illus.)

Die Schlacht von Karlawatsch*(The Battle of Karlawatsch)*

Zürich: Atlantis Verlag, 2018. – [32] p.

ISBN 978-3-7152-0735-3

Enmity | Escalation | War | Reconciliation |
Picture book

»And then, they advanced«. This is the beginning of the text in this picture book. The first sentence, however, is preceded by four wordless, narrative double-page spreads that show why this battle between the red and the blue people starts. They are hurling pointy helmets with spikes at each other, then buttons, jackets, trousers, and shoes, until the opponents are facing each other in their underwear and nobody can remember who is red or blue, who is enemy or foe. In their parable, Heinz Janisch and Aljoscha Blau discuss how a conflict comes to the boil and how, after major losses, the people finally see reason and agree that it is better to eat together than to fight each other. The large-format picture book captures the timeless and unfortunately ever-present topic in concise sentences and illustrations rendered in grey, red, and blue. In a truly striking way, the book illustrates the absurdity of violent conflict. (Age: 4+)

108



Michaēlidu-Kadē, Marina

(Michaelidou-Kadi, Marina) (text)

Kutsogiannēs, Basilēs

(Koutsogiannis, Vassilis) (illus.)

Ē kitrinē kubēpta tēs eutyxias*(The yellow blanket of happiness)*

Leukōsia (Nicosia): Teleia, 2018. – [29] p.

ISBN 978-9925-551-09-5

Family | Divorce | Father | Daughter |
Picture book

On many a cold night, when the father, who works as a pilot, is not at home, a girl and her mother share a sun-yellow blanket and a film. It's always the same blanket, the same film. Yet one day, the parents separate. The yellow blanket no longer provides warmth, and the daughter feels increasingly estranged from her father. It is not until he picks her up for an outing one day and rescues the neighbour's dog, that both she and her mother start feeling sympathy for him again. With sensitivity and without any didactic or moral intent, award-winning author Marina Michaelidou-Kadi's story indicates how important it is to maintain a feeling of togetherness, as well as to keep up the rituals so familiar and meaningful for a child. Promising artist Vassilis Koutsogiannis creates an almost photo-realistic likeness of the protagonists' faces in the central images. Their contrasting and reluctant feelings, on the other hand, become symbolically visible in an imaginative and empathetic way through the complementary colours yellow and violet. (Age: 5+)

GERMAN
GREEKSwitzerland
Cyprus

109



Dēmētruka, Agathē (Dimitrouka, Agathi) (text)
Tässies (illus.)

An

(If)

Athēna: Kaleidoskopio (Kaleidoscope Publications),
[2018]. – [36]p.
ISBN 978-960-471-139-0

Imagination | Poetry | Picture book

Nothing is unimaginable; everything becomes possible when a child uses the word »if«. It is an effective means for letting the imagination roam free and creating something new. This is exactly what happens in this poem that consists of three short verses. The magical word »if« gives the young protagonist the strength to express her dream. One little »if« brings her a black horse, and soon human love envelops the world, breathes happiness, and conjures up sun-drenched cities. »An« was written by Agathi Dimitrouka in 1982 as one of her poems for the unpublished musical composition »Diphonies« by Manos Hadjidakis. Music can also be detected in Tässies's large-format pictures. They are expressive, dynamic, and full of rhythm, allowing the viewer to immerse themselves and experience a child's limitless imagination. With colours and lines that reflect the poem's epic tone and add a surreal touch to the text, the illustrations celebrate the energy of the child protagonist. »An« received the picture book prize 2019 by the renowned literature magazine »o anagnostis«. (Age: 4+)

110



Ntekastro, Mariza (De Castro, Marisa) (text)
Papageōrgiu, Basilēs (Papageorgiou, Vassilis)
(illus.)

2651 ēmeres diktatorias. 21 Apriliu

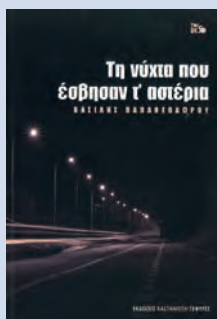
1967 - 24 Iuliu 1974 (2651 days of dictatorship.
21 April 1967 - 24 July 1974)

Athēna: Metaichmio, 2018. – 87 p.
ISBN 978-618-03-1613-1

Greece | History 1967-1974 | Dictatorship |
Non-fiction

Shaped by the point of view of the author, who was a teenage girl at the time, this partly autobiographical book presents the dark years of the military dictatorship in Greece in a historically well-founded and objective way. The non-fiction book, which was shortlisted for the 2019 IBBY Greece awards, deals both with the deep rupture that these 2651 days caused, especially for young people, and with the way in which Marisa De Castro's own political thinking gradually developed. The double-spread pages are divided, with events in Greece documented on the left, and simultaneously occurring international events providing some context on the right. To illustrate the texts, Vassilis Papageorgiou altered contemporary press photos. They are rendered partly in murky, diffuse black-and-white, partly in loud, vibrant colours to reflect oppression and resistance as well as the dynamic developments in politics, society, art, music, and fashion, up to the point when the dictatorship was finally overcome after seven years. Renowned author Marisa de Castro has received several awards for her other outstanding non-fiction books. (Age: 12+)

111



Papatheodōru, Basilēs
(Papatheodorou, Vassilis) (text)
Tē nykta pu esbēsan t'asteria
(*The night when the stars went out*)
Athēna: Kastaniōtēs, 2018. – 232 p.
ISBN 978-960-03-6464-4

Rape | Murder | Prejudice | Ostracising |
Guilt | Dishonesty

On a cold Friday in January, Lena, a 12th grader, was raped and murdered. Apart from a few people who are deeply shocked, most of her family and friends, as well as several other people, indulge in mutual recriminations, struggle with feelings of guilt, cover up or expose poisoned family relationships, bitch about Lena's attractiveness, openly suspect foreigners, or hypocritically expatiate the case on social media platforms. The plot unfolds through nine characters' monologues, in which it becomes apparent that this is not just about physical violence. In an unvarnished and powerful language, the skilful narrative mirrors the moral instability and socio-political deficits of the petit bourgeois atmosphere in a Greek metropolis. Vassilis Papatheodorou is one of Greece's most renowned authors of children's and youth literature. His novel was awarded the 2019 teenage book prize by the magazine »o anagnostis«. (Age: 14+)

112



Pipinē, Argyrō (Pipini, Argyro) (text)
Kamperē, Iphigeneia (Kamperi, Ifiyenia) (illus.)
Periklēs kai Aspasia. Mikra Gatika
(*Perikles and Aspasia. Short cat stories*)
Athēna: Patakēs, 2018. – 62 p.
(Series: Mikra gatika; 1 / Seira Kolimpri)
ISBN 978-960-16-8186-3

Pericles | Athens | History 5th century BC | Cat

It is common knowledge that Aspasia was the most beloved partner of Greek statesman Pericles (5th century BC). Wrong! She was merely the second Aspasia – the »very second«, as Pericles's cat clarifies, whose name was also Aspasia, and who considered herself the first and thus true Aspasia. In this first volume of a new book series that claims that it were cats, not women, who stood behind great men in history, renowned author Argyro Pipini introduces readers to the life of Pericles and the golden age in Athens, and last but not least, to the glorious life of cat Aspasia, who served as a muse for this great man of Greek antiquity. Full of wit and written in a refreshing, accessible language, the book enriches historical facts in an imaginative way without perverting them. The illustrations by Ifiyenia Kamperis complement the text in a humorous manner and make numerous intertextual allusions. Two other titles in this original series are »Anthony and Cleopatra« and »Napoleon and Josephine«. (Age: 5+)

113



Yalan-Shṭekelis, Miryam
(Yalan-Shtekelis, Miriam) (text)
Gordon-Noy, Aya (illus.)
Ma'ase be'yalda bodeda
(*A lonely girl's tale*)
Hevel Modi'in: Dvir, [2018]. – [33] p.
ISBN 978-965-566-750-9

Loneliness | Imagination | Poetry |
Picture book

This well-known and popular poem by Miriam Yalan-Shtekelis tells the tale of a determined little girl who turns to the moon and asks her for a story. Since the moon does not answer immediately, the girl begins telling stories to her instead – stories about a magic ring, about three dwarves, about two stars, a moon, and a lonely girl. The poem, first published in one of the author's poetry anthologies in 1946, has been re-illustrated and re-edited several times since then. Many of Miriam Yalan-Shtekelis's poems have also been set to music and she has been awarded a number of important prizes. In this picture book, young children's book illustrator Aya Gordon-Noy provides a new perspective on the poem by interpreting the text in an optimistic way. In these illustrations, created in a mixture of collage and gouache technique, boredom offers the protagonist an opportunity to let her imagination run free. The girl is very resourceful and thus overcomes the feeling of being lonely. (Age: 5+)

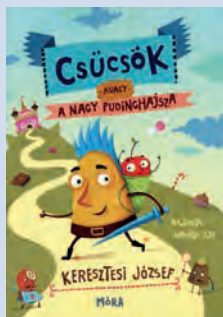
114



Dániel, András (text/illus.)
A nyúlformájú kutya
(*The rabbit shaped dog*)
[Budapest]: Tilos az Á Könyvek, 2018. – 75 p.
ISBN 978-963-410-376-9

Identity | Role expectations | Existence |
Picture book

»A nyúlformájú kutya« is one of the most unusual Hungarian books that appeared in 2018. With little text and richly illustrated, it tells a complex story of philosophical-existential reflections: Károly the dog lives in the body of a rabbit. He cannot get along with the other rabbits, because he is a dog and thinks and lives that way. Károly is not seen as such by other dogs, though. The outside world perceives his identity to be that of a rabbit. But perhaps the outside world itself is not always as it seems? Perhaps others are also stuck in unfitting forms and feel themselves misunderstood, unperceived? As Károly wanders pensively through the pages of the book, his soliloquy brings him to question the divide between inner and outer perception, and how it is possible in pre-given (bodily) limitations to discern one's real self and to live it out. (Age: 12+)



115

Keresztesi, József (text)

Horváth, Ildi (illus.)

Csücsök avagy A nagy pudinghajszja, hajmeresztő és igaz története, tíz fejezetben elmesélve

(*Croissant, or the great pudding chase and hairstyling. A story in ten chapters*)

[Budapest]: Móra, [2018]. – 94 p.

ISBN 978-963-486-042-6

Love | Adventure | Nonsense | Verse novel

Among the publications in Hungarian children's literature in 2018, this book is an absolute must-read. József Keresztesi (b. 1970) has created a nonsense story in the form of a poem or verse novel about a host of tasty delights – all manner of puddings, chocolate waffles, sugary baked goods. The desserts have distinct personalities and character traits that clash a decent amount. Brave croissant Csücsök attempts to chivalrously save his love Princess Mignon, who has been kidnapped by a terrible blood pudding. Playfully, wittily, and with numerous allusions to great literary romances, József Keresztesi sets his croissant hero on a strange, adventure-filled quest, which will delight children as well as adults who have a taste for incisive poetic stylings and artful wordplay. (Age: 8+)



116

Aristarco, Daniele (text)

Lettere a una dodicenne sul fascismo di ieri e di oggi (*Letters to a twelve-year-old girl about fascism yesterday and today*)

San Dorligo della Valle (Trieste): Einaudi Ragazzi, [2019]. – 105 p.

(Series: Presenti passati)

ISBN 978-88-6656-508-6

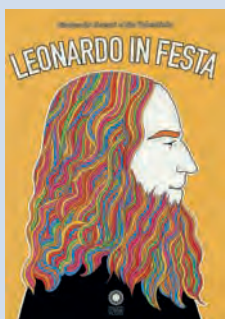
Fascism | Neofascism | Antifascism | Resistance | Civil courage | Non-fiction

In the new series »Contemporary pasts«, Daniele Aristarco outlines an important time in Italian history. In an easy-to-read, yet still thoughtful way, he explores in letter form how fascism took root after World War I, driven by Mussolini. The author explains how Mussolini first turned to socialism, then founded the fascist party and became a dictator – and why it is he received such wide public support. Other figures are also introduced who played roles in the crimes committed during the 20-year fascist rule, such as the murder of Giacomo Matteotti, the imprisonment of dissenters, or Italy's entry into World War II as a German ally. The letters are addressed to a student of today, Giulia, who becomes aware of the importance of history and the continuing necessity for vigilance and civil courage, so that the past doesn't repeat itself. Reading, curiosity, knowledge, travel, and cultural exchange are suggested as possible antidotes to a culture's coarsening. (Age: 11+)

HUNGARIAN
ITALIAN

Hungary
Italy

117



Ascari, Giancarlo (text)

Valentinis, Pia (illus.)

Leonardo in festa*(Leonardo celebrating)*

Modena: Franco Cosimo Panini, 2019. – [32] p.

ISBN 978-88-570-1473-9

Leonardo da Vinci | Milan | Court | Festival | Renaissance | History 1490 | Picture book

Commemorating the 500th anniversary of Leonardo da Vinci's death, this colourful picture book portrays the great »Festa del Paradiso«, which Leonardo organized in 1490 on the occasion of Gian Galeazzo Sforza's marriage to Isabella of Aragón in Milan at the Castello Sforzesco. The guests couldn't stop marvelling at the wonders: Poetry, music, dance, visual art, light show, pharaonic stage designs, and bold, never-before-seen stage equipment. Readers are shown around the castle's rooms by Amideo, a young apprentice in the genius's workshop. With him, readers enjoy the rich colours and artistic inventions; they dive into history and discover lesser-known facts about the life of Leonardo, aside from his more famous works; they meet actors and stage extras, rulers and courtiers. The vibrant illustrations also allude to some of Leonardo's more famous works. The book is an homage to beauty. (Age: 6+)

118



Calì, Davide (text)

Labate, Alessandra (illus.)

Tre in tutto*(Three in total)*

Roma: Orecchio acerbo, [2018]. – [36] p.

ISBN 978-88-99064-85-3

Italy | History 1945-1952 | World War II | Poverty | Hunger | Deportation | Picture book

This picture book tells a true, little-known story of solidarity in war-torn Italy. At the end of World War II, distress and hunger reigned over the whole country. There were regions, however, where childhood was harsher than in others. This is why a women's association established at that time called upon well-off families in the north of the country to take in children from such regions hit hardest, to offer them a sense of hope for the future. Designed like a family album, the book tells the story of two brothers who came to the Emilia-Romagna region as children and reflect on those times many years later. One of the two describes his first train ride, the absorbing views from the train, his first bath in a bath tub, new clothing, school, and food. So much food for those who had hungered! The brothers gape at the delicious, nutritious, and meticulously prepared tortellini offered to them. The boys never forgot the tortellini nor the deep attachments that grew from that hopeful and wonderful time. (Age: 7+)

119



Carioli, Janna (text)
Facchini, Vittoria (illus.)

Sei bellissima

(You are very beautiful)

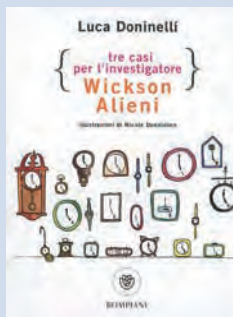
Casalecchio di Reno (Bologna): Fatatrac,
2019. – [42] p.

ISBN 978-88-8222-475-2

[Bodily experience](#) | [Eating disorder](#) | [Anorexia](#) |
[Identity](#) | [Picture book](#)

Lea is a very pretty child. She has a shadow that accompanies her, just as everyone does. But her shadow doesn't respect any rules; it rebels against Lea in a constantly changing game of temptations. Sometimes her shadow is light, fine, elegant, and then suddenly becomes round, soft, buttery, only to become ethereal and almost imperceptible before changing to corporeal and earthy. How can Lea and her shadow live together if they don't find anything in common? How can they learn to share life's good and bad moments if they don't know each other? Lea's self-confidence eventually increases. With its inventive use of colours and shapes, the large-format picture book offers an original take on the serious topic of eating disorders in a gentle and careful way in both its text and its pictures. It is remarkable how Vittoria Facchini succeeds in translating Lea's insecurity into apt pictures. (Age: 6+)

120



Doninelli, Luca (text)
Donaldson, Nicole (illus.)

Tre casi per l'investigatore Wickson Alieni

(Three cases for Detective Wickson Alieni)

[Milano]: Bompiani, 2018. – 158 p.

ISBN 978-88-452-9353-5

[London](#) | [Detective](#) | [Invisibility](#) | [Crime fiction](#)

Luca Doninelli was awarded the Premio Strega Ragazze e Ragazzi 2019 in the Ages 6-10 division for this book. It tells the story of Wickson Alieni, a truly special detective in every sense – he is in fact invisible to everyone, except to a mouse and a Chinese man. Invisibility, a sought-after skill in the world of detective work, enables practically limitless space for action. Wickson Alieni's ability proves itself to be extremely helpful to Inspector Frank Fellikke, since the Inspector relies on the detective to solve cases that he himself then takes credit for. The Inspector thus has a lot of free time, which he likes to spend fussing over the single hair on his head. The single hair is called Filippo and can speak. Readers follow along on three adventure-filled cases that take place in London, a city beset with terrible crimes. Cloud-capturing machines, a thickening fog, and five o'clock teas collide as the real, the surreal, and the fantastical intermingle. The suspenseful and comic story will baffle readers at more than one turn. (Age: 7+)

121



Masini, Beatrice (text)

Negrin, Fabian (illus.)

Le amiche che vorresti e dove trovarle*(The female friends you'd like to have, and where to find them)*

Firenze [et al.]: Giunti, [2019]. – 139 p.

ISBN 978-88-09-87227-1

Literature | Novel | Classic | Female protagonist

In this remarkable book, we encounter 22 female protagonists from novels. They are introduced textually by Beatrice Masini and pictorially by Fabian Negrin. The highly varied group of female characters, created by extraordinary authors, are here presented to readers in a new light. Classics from yesterday meet today's classics. We learn, for instance, of Mary's journey from India to her »Secret Garden«; of Pippi from Sweden, who has an unquenchable need to be free; and of little Zazie, who meets strange, quirky people in the streets of Paris, outside the metro. We also see remarkable Jo, depicted very beautifully with her grey eyes, her passion for writing, and her non-conformist organized chaos. These stories offer an invitation to read, look, discover, and read again. (Age: 11+)

122



Sanna, Alessandro (illus.)

Come questa pietra. Il libro di tutte le guerre*(Like this stone. The book of all wars)*

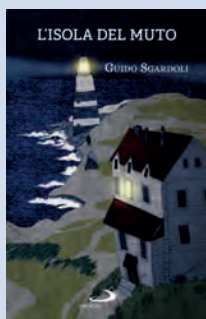
Milano: Rizzoli, [2019]. – [176] p.

ISBN 978-88-17-10949-9

Battle | Conflict | War | Picture book

In this large-format book almost wholly devoid of text, Alessandro Sanna captures in images the chaos and clamour raised by the countless wars humans have waged with each other. War is always deafening, even when it is fought without machines or modern technology. War alters landscapes and countries and determines the fate of human beings and other living creatures on all continents. This book deals with the wars of early humans and ancient myths, the simulated war of child's play and present-day conflicts, and all undeclared and unexplained, but still utterly real wars. The encounters are impressively captured in single and double spreads, which alternate and are kept to a muted colour palette. Some pages are further divided into multiple illustrated sequences. The viewer travels through space and time, studying the powerful images to find the causes, particular circumstances, and signs of wars. The question concerning our future is left open. (Age: 10+)

123



Sgardoli, Guido (text)

L'isola del Muto*(The Island of the Mute)*Cinisello Balsamo (Milano): San Paolo,
[2018]. – 359 p.

(Series: Narrativa San Paolo ragazzi)

ISBN 978-88-922-1363-0

Island | Lighthouse keeper | Family saga

The plot of this complex family saga spans 150 years, from 1816 to 1966, with a glimpse forward to 2016. The protagonist is Arne Bjørneboe, a Norwegian sailor severely disfigured in a battle at sea. As a result of the tragic accident, the despairing man isolates himself from others and stops talking. He finds new courage and his vocation as a lighthouse keeper on an inhospitable little island, which is named the »Island of the Mute« in his honour. Some of his descendants decide to leave the island, some stay and take over his job, until the lighthouse becomes fully automated. Detailed description brings the variety of remarkable personalities among this group of men, women, and children to life. Every character has a distinct role to play in the novel. Technological modernisation and social progress are just as masterfully portrayed as the island's unwavering conditions. Author Guido Sgardoli artfully combines adventure and historical fiction in his novel. (Age: 14+)

124



Ishikawa, Eiko (text/illus.)

Kankeri*(Kick the can)*

Tōkyō: Arisukan, 2018. – 35 p.

ISBN 978-4-7520-0853-8

Game | Courage | Picture book

Eiko Ishikawa is an illustrator who has been in the spotlight since making her debut with »Botayama de asonda koro« in 2014. Her latest picture book, »Kankeri«, shows the characteristic flowing lines of her powerful illustrations. Kankeri (Kick-the-can) is a traditional children's game. The players try to kick the can without being noticed by It, the catcher, who guards the can. The protagonist of »Kankeri«, Chie, is a shy girl who always depends on her friends. When Chie plays the game and becomes the only one to save other players, she gathers all her courage. The lively, dramatic illustrations aptly capture the moment when she rushes out of the hiding place and kicks the can. The dark space giving way to light outside represents her slight emotional wavering. Even her thumping heartbeats are tangible to readers. The theme and scenery are nostalgic, but Ishikawa's artistry, as seen in her unique use of frames, for example, makes this book appealing to children today. (Age: 4+)

ITALIAN
JAPANESEItaly
Japan

125



Kikuchi, Chiki (text/illus.)

Momiji no tagami*(The scarlet maple leaf letter)*

Tōkyō: Komine Shoten, 2018. – 31 p.

ISBN 978-4-338-26132-6

Autumn | Mountains | Leaf | Animals |
Picture book

Chiki Kikuchi (b. 1975) is the 2013 winner of the Golden Apple at the Biennial of Illustrations Bratislava. His internationally acclaimed illustrations are dynamic, bold and offer dramatic plays on perspective. »Momiji no tegami« is a picture book to celebrate the beauty of autumn. The breath-taking mountain scenery seems to have been influenced by the artist's childhood in the lush nature of the Northern Japanese area of Hokkaido. In this picture book, a mouse, a squirrel, and a bulbul set out on a journey to find scarlet-coloured maple leaves. After discovering a leaf that turns out not to be a leaf, they are frightened by a predator, and finally arrive, amazed, at the scarlet mountain, at which point readers learn the reason for their strenuous search. The simple, repetitive text is easy to follow. The thoughtful and sophisticated design of the book, including its textured jacket and endpapers, makes it a true treasure. (Age: 3+)

126



Kodemari, Rui (text)

Aru hareta natsu no asa*(On a bright summer morning)*

Tōkyō: Kaiseisha, 2018. – 204 p.

ISBN 978-4-03-643200-4

Japan | History 1945 | Hiroshima |
Atomic bomb | USA | Debate

Atomic bombing is recognized as evil in Japan, but not necessarily in other countries. Some people justify it as a necessary act to end war. »Aru hareta natsu no asa« is special among children's books about the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in its subtle depiction of young people from different backgrounds holding various historical views. Written by Rui Kodemari, a Japanese author living in the USA since 1992, the novel portrays American high school students participating in a panel discussion on the atomic bombing of Japan. The protagonist is a Japanese-American girl. While one of the students believes that the people killed by the bombing were not Japanese civilians but soldiers, opposing arguments indicate that the victims of the atomic bombing and nuclear testing were racially discriminated against non-whites like Japanese, Native American, or Bikini Atoll people. The characters' speaking style is a little unusual, not quite native Japanese-sounding. This may enable easier translation into other languages. (Age: 13+)

127



Kokaze, Sachi (text)
Yamaguchi, Mao (illus.)

Amu

(*Amu, the mighty dog*)

Tōkyō: Fukuinkan Shoten, 2018. – 31 p.

(Series: Kodomo no tomo ehon)

ISBN 978-4-8340-8389-7

[Dog](#) | [Sea](#) | [Boy](#) | [Picture book](#)

Amu is a dog living with the boy Kacchan. At their secret place by the river, Kacchan tells Amu that the mysterious »i-n-sha-ra-ra i-n-sha-ra-ra« is the sound coming from the sea. Kacchan promises to take Amu to the sea, and Amu wonders what the sea is. The next day Kacchan and a friend go there. Moved by his adventurous spirit and strong affection for Kacchan, Amu careens after them. His manner is like that of a wild young boy and remarkably compelling. The soulful, warm, expressive illustrations masterfully bring the strong-willed, energetic dog to life. From the first page, young readers will identify with and cheer for him. The rhythmical text with engaging onomatopoeia is perfect for reading aloud. Author Sachi Kokaze (b. 1955) and illustrator Mao Yamaguchi (b. 1958) are well known for their »Alligator-Alli« series, which has been translated into Chinese and Korean. (Age: 3+)

128



Okuhara, Yume (text/illus.)

Watashi to ironna neko

(*Lots of cats and me*)

Tōkyō: Akane Shobō, 2018. – 93 p.

ISBN 978-4-251-07307-5

[Cat](#) | [Friendship](#) | [Reconciliation](#) | [Grandmother](#)

It is difficult to write novels for young readers. The stories should be simple, satisfying, and written from their point of view. »Watashi to ironna neko«, the first novel written by Yume Okuhara after many picture books, is undoubtedly one of those. The protagonist Aya is an elementary school girl who wants to have cats. She misses her grandmother's cat, which disappeared just after her grandmother's death. Aya's boldness, talkativeness, and sharp tongue sometimes stir trouble with her friends. After she fights with her best friend and fails to make friends with a new shy girl in the neighbourhood, an invisible fluffy cat, a gigantic cat, and a tiny cat appear one after another. They soften her hardened heart and nudge her to make up with friends. The profound and imaginative story invites readers into the inner world of Aya, following the subtle changes in her emotions and her path toward maturity. The charming childlike illustrations match the story very well. (Age: 9+)

129



Ōtake, Hidehiro (text)

Soshite boku wa tabi ni deta. Hajimari no mori nōsu uzzu

(And then I went on a journey. It began in the Northwoods.)

Tōkyō: Asunaro shobō, 2017. – 418 p. + 6 p.
ISBN 978-4-7515-2868-6

USA | Canada | Northwoods | Journey |
Photographer | Brandenburg, Jim | Non-fiction

Inspired by the renowned photographer Michio Hoshino (1952-1996), Hidehiro Ōtake here expresses himself through photos and insightful texts. »Soshite boku wa tabi ni deta« is a non-fiction book, which vividly captures the sound, smell, and wonder of the breath-taking scenery of the American Northwoods. When Ōtake was a university student twenty years ago, he dreamed of a wolf in the woods. The next day, he found the photographic collection of wolves taken by acclaimed American photographer Jim Brandenburg (b. 1945). After his attempt to become Brandenburg's apprentice failed, he decided to visit the forest despite not having Brandenburg's exact address. He travelled the Northwoods by canoeing on the lakes, portaging over land, camping, and surviving a stormy night. During his »spiritual quest«, Ōtake thought about his motivation for taking photos, the relationship between man and nature, and where human beings' tendency to separate ourselves from nature will lead us. This book encourages young people to take the first step in their independent lives. (Age: 16+)

130



Toyoda, Naomi (text/photos)

**»Ushi ga kieta mura« de tane wo maku.
»Madei« na mura no nakama to tomoni**

(Planting seeds in the »village whose cows disappeared«. People of the warm-hearted village)

Tōkyō: Nōsan gyoson bunka kyōkai, 2018. – 32 p.
(Series: Soredemo »furusato«)
ISBN 978-4-540-17187-1

Japan | History 2011 | Nuclear accident |
Farm | Picture book | Non-fiction

Iitate was called the most beautiful village in Japan until March 2011. After the nuclear power plant accident in Fukushima, the pastoral scenery turned into the bare land with 2.3 million bags of radioactive soil. Kenichi Hasegawa is one of the residents who is distressed to see his hometown in crisis. As a farmer, he could not leave the land to ruin and began planting buckwheat seed with other villagers. He knows irradiated buckwheat is commercially worthless but still helpful to preserve the farmland's soil. His strong-willed and decisive way recalls Jean Giono's masterpiece »The Man Who Planted Trees« and Martin Luther's words »Even if I knew that tomorrow the world would go to pieces, I would still plant my apple tree.« The striking photos show the horror of radiation that remains harmful for an immensely long time, as well as the everyday life of people struggling with the intolerable situation. These themes are echoed in other books of the same series »Soredemo ›Furusato‹ (Still my hometown).« (Age: 9+)



131

Yasuda, Kana (text)

Mukōgishi

(*The opposite shore*)

Tōkyō: Kōdansha, 2018. – 253 p.

ISBN 978-4-06-513908-0

Social disparity | Social security |
Underachievement | Discrimination |
Outsider

»Mukōgishi« expertly handles the Japanese social problem of condemning welfare recipients. The novel has two protagonists: a tough, feisty girl named Itsuki and Kazuma, an insecure boy who had to leave the top-ranked school because of underachievement. Itsuki takes care of her invalid mother and younger sister but is apologetic about receiving welfare as her classmates condemn it as laziness. As the protagonists come to know each other, their complicated feelings of inferiority, suppressed anger, and helplessness gradually diminish. The book title refers to Itsuki and Kazuma, who initially both feel alienated from the other's circumstances, given their socio-economic differences. The title also refers to Itsuki's wish to realize her dreams in the face of economic hardship. Other characters in the story are also depicted with depth and sensitivity, including their classmate's uncle, economically exploited as an assistant professor, and their friend Abel, silenced by his Nigerian immigrant father, who became a violent man after being the victim of racial discrimination. (Age: 13+)



132

Baek, Heena (Baeg, Hui Na) (text/illus.)

Na neun gae da

(*I am a dog*)

Seoul: Chaek ingneum gom (Bear Books Publ.), 2019. – [42] p.

(Series: Geurim chaegi cham joa; 056)

ISBN 979-11-5836-136-5

Family | Pet | Dog | Animal welfare |
Picture book

This is another touching story by well-known Korean picture book author Baek Heena, who from 2014 to 2019 has annually been nominated for the Astrid Lindgren Memorial Award. Her books often recall Claymation movies, their protagonists being sculptures arranged and photographed in miniature film sets. From a dog's perspective, we are told how a puppy named Guseuli is adopted by five-year-old Dongdongi's family once the puppy is weaned. Guseuli misses its mother and its sibling puppies terribly, and every time it hears dogs howling in the neighbourhood, Guseuli has to respond, because they might be its family. Guseuli's new life consists mostly of waiting in the empty house for its human housemates to return. It wonders why Dongdongi and Grandmother stumble and get so angry when running for a walk together. Guseuli doesn't understand why it is punished when it has an accident on the bed after having been fed junk food. Nonetheless, Guseuli becomes a real family member and gives – and is given – unconditional love by Dongdongi. (Age: 3+)

JAPANESE
KOREAN

Japan
Republic of Korea

133



Ham, Min-bok (Ham, Min Bok) (text)
Yoon, Tae Kyu (Yun, Tae Gyu) (illus.)
Norae neun choeseon eul dahae gokseon ida
(*Every song does its best to be a curve*)
Paju: Munhak dongne (Munhakdongne Publ.),
2019. – 109 p.
(Series: Munhak dongne dongsijip; 68)
ISBN 978-89-546-5579-8

Animals | Question | Philosophy | Song |
Poetry

Ham Min-bok worked at a nuclear power plant before becoming the most beloved professional poet of South Korea. Trying to revive traditional aesthetics while employing a modern style, he also writes poems for young readers. In this volume, illustrated by graphic designer and picture book author Yoon Tae Kyu, he captures the strength, beauty, and charm of various animals with perceptive insight. He explains that the aim of these poems is to find the way to the heart of a person, the way to the child-like heart in all people. So like a child who has never seen the world before, he asks questions over and over, adding new answers to previous answers, and expanding the realm of awareness. In contrast to the language of prosaic daily life which makes people react stiffly, following, as it were, a straight line, every song »does its best to be a curve« while it leads readers on a beautiful, winding path, evoking an emotional alignment with the way a curve flows: gently. (Age: 7+)

134



Heo, Kyo-bum (Heo, Gyo Beo) (text)
Ko, Sang-mi (Go, Sang Mi) (illus.)
Tamjeong daehoe 1 bu
(*The detective of twenty questions*)
Seoul: Biryongso (BIR Publishing), 2019. – 193 p.
(Series: Seumugogae Tamjeong; sijeun III, 10)
ISBN 978-89-491-9589-6

Mystery | Adventure | Detective | Crime fiction

In this tenth volume of the series »The detective of twenty questions«, several primary school children are competing to solve mysterious problems over a period of three days and two nights. Seumugogae Tamjeong, who can solve any mystery in twenty questions and who has already reached the final round of the tournament, chooses Munyang as his partner, who feels grateful and wants to perform well. However, while facing the first question, he is already in trouble, and there are several unexpected rivals. How will the boys get on? For his debut, the first volume of the series, Heo Kyo-bum received the Grand Prize of the Story King Literary Award in 2013, chosen by a jury of young readers. The bestselling series is praised for its gripping plots and for creating a new trend in the genre of Korean children's detective stories. Illustrator and picture book author Ko Sang-mi received several awards for her debut »A dog wearing shoes« (2015). (Age: 10+)



135

Song, Mi-kyoung (Song, Mi Gyeong)
(original text/adaptation)

Dol ssibeo meongneun ai

(A child eating stones)

Paju: Munhak dongne (Munhakdongne Publ.),
2019. – 95 p.

(Series: Eorini huigok; 1)

ISBN 978-89-546-5521-7

Family | Social interaction | Secret | Play

The plays for children in this book were adapted from »A Child Eating Stones«, a popular short story collection first published in 2014 and rewarded with the Changwon Children's Literature Award in 2015. The author and illustrator, who is recognized for her experimental and provocative imagination and who received the Woongjin Junior Literary Award and the Korea Book Award for Children's Fiction for previous publications, expands the spectrum of her work here once again. Three mysteries are presented in the form of plays. »I bought a Tongue« portrays a boy who buys a tongue that enables him to talk freely. In »A Couple of Cats Picked Me Up«, a cat couple approaches a girl, and the cats confess that they are her parents. »A Child Eating Stones« reveals the secret of a family going on a picnic with a pack of stones and erasers. Regardless of whether they are read on one's own or performed together, the plays and the role-playing experience can help children develop a confident self-image and encourage them to live freely in their own ways. (Age: 10+)



136

Sua Hyeon (text/illus.)

Heung chit ppung

(Hmph!)

Seoul: Hyeonamsa junieo (Hyeonamsa Publ.),
2018. – [42] p.

ISBN 978-89-323-7478-9

Neighbour | Family | Care | Picture book

Dad wanted to teach Yun to ride her bike, but he is too tired once again. Mom has promised to buy cake for her, but she is going to be late again. Yun feels that nobody ever listens to her, and she doesn't want to talk to anybody today. Angry and blind to her surroundings, she stomps through her neighbourhood not realizing how much everybody cares for her. Vivid and comic illustrations show the turbulent scenes, collisions and damages generated by the neighbours while they try to protect the grumpy and unaware little girl. They prevent her from crashing into other people, from being hit by a ball, or from being stalked on the playground. When one of the neighbours stands in the way of a big dog attacking Yun, he causes all the fruit stalls in the market to collapse. In the midst of this tumult her parents arrive with a long-awaited present, and Yun finally feels cared for. Sua Hyeon graduated with a bachelor's degree in design at Seoul National University in 2010. This is her third picture book. (Age: 4+)

137



Paklone, Inese (text)
 Stanislavska, Vivianna Maria (illus.)
Es picas brālēņu cepu
(Baking a pizza's cousin)
 Rīga: Pētergailis, [2019]. – 67 p.
 ISBN 978-9984-33-484-4

Family | Child | Perception | Poetry

In Latvia, Inese Paklone is cherished both as a translator from Dutch and as a children's poet. In her new book, she takes a common familial order of child, father, mother and grandparents as the starting point for a lyrical scouting expedition for Albert, the story's child protagonist. He is amazed at the multi-tasking capabilities of his mother, shares a passion for collecting coins with his father, and is concerned about Grandpa's back pains. Across five sections, each of which has several poems, Paklone sheds light on the boy's relationship with each family member. Albert himself leads a life as secret agent »006« and can hardly wait to go to school. The child's cosmos is captured with varied and entertaining pictures by illustrator Maria Vivianna Stanislavska, who has received many accolades for her work. »Es picas brālēņu cepu« was nominated for the 2019 International Jānis Baltvilks Prize. (Age: 5+)

138



Vērdiņš, Kārlis (text)
 Lukošus, Rebeka (illus.)
Dilles tante. Poēma
(Aunt Dille. A poem)
 [Rīga]: Liels un mazs, [2018]. – 41 p.
 ISBN 978-9934-574-22-1

Passion | Self-assertion | Self-realization |
 Verse novel

Aunt Dille loves poems, especially those she writes herself. She lives for verse but finds it difficult to persuade others of its value. No matter where she turns up to recite her texts, people run in the other direction. Matters change after Aunt Dille is arrested, though. Constable Antis listens to her and realizes that it's not just her poems that he likes. Kārlis Vērdiņš (b. 1979) is one of the most important contemporary Latvian lyricists. Here, his marvellously dynamic, very sincere verse speaks to how it's not always easy to pursue one's passion and to believe in oneself – but that at some point one will find like-minded companions and no longer feel so alone. The irony-spiked little story has a wonderfully funny side thanks to Rebeka Lukošus's (b. 1995) illustrations, which really flesh out Aunt Dille's quirkiness and charming dottiness. (Age: 5+)



139

Bėrantas, Benas (text)
Kvieskaitė, Vilija (illus.)

Baubaimė

(Bugbear fear)

Vilnius: Nieko rimto, 2018. – [38] p.
ISBN 978-609-441-532-6

Fear | Coping with fear | Emotional skills |
Picture book

Everyone's afraid of something: of the dark, of heights or of losing a loved one. In the case of Tiklis the squirrel and Kirnis the raven – best friends who love sleepovers – it's the fear of heading out to find a lost ball all on their own. After all, waiting outside is the Fear Monster! As they journey out, they meet a series of other forest dwellers, like Bear, Owl or Rabbit, and soon realize that everyone has experienced Fear before. When Kirnis and Tiklis finally return, they learn that even their parents fear something – they fear for their children's safety. In their second collaborative picture book, literary agent and children's book author Benas Bėrantas and illustrator Vilija Kvieskaitė tackle fear and how to manage it; they also show that it's not so bad to experience one's fears and best to »befriend« them. (Age: 3+)



140

Kosturanov, Vane (text/illus.)

Devojče i meče

(The girl and the bear)

Skopje: Ars Lamina, 2019. – [28] p.
ISBN 978-608-259-358-6

Toy | Friendship | Change | Growing up |
Picture book

Following his award-winning first picture book »Svezdeno dete« (Star child), Vane Kosturanov (b. 1979) ups the ante with the poetic tale »Devojče i meče« (The girl and the bear). Creating a beautifully intimate atmosphere, he broaches the childhood theme of growing up. With wide, airy illustrations, Kosturanov presents a girl who plays with her plush toy – a bear –, taking him through the world and sharing everything with him. They celebrate their birthdays together, dream of playing amongst the stars, and spend sick days together in bed. When the girl makes friends with other children, the bear is left behind. The pictures draw on the relativity of size to reveal the changing relationship of the two protagonists. At first, the bear is enormous and hugging the girl; by the end the girl holds a teddy bear under her arm. »Devojče i meče« was recognized as the best illustrated children's book in 2019 by the Macedonian publishers' association. (Age: 3+)

LITHUANIAN
MACEDONIAN

Lithuania
Macedonia

141



Aalbu, Ragnar (text/illus.)

Hakk o ve*(Peck oh [and] Pain)*

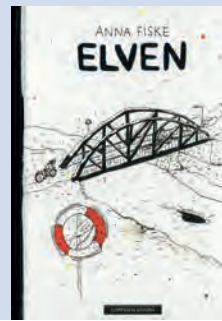
[Bergen]: Ena Forlag, 2018. – [44] p.

ISBN 978-82-419-1742-4

Identity | Crisis | Alternatives | Picture book

A woodpecker is in existential crisis: His doctor diagnoses a concussion and advises him to cease his core activities of pecking and flying. He wonders, beak hanging low: What is he supposed to do now? He and a mole consider alternatives. The two let their thoughts roam, but it doesn't help. The woodpecker gets angrier: This dumb doctor just forbids everything that is woodpecker-y! Then, a saving insight arrives, and he's a happy woodpecker once more. Phew! The pictures, composed by Ragnar Aalbu using his typical graphic-geometric reductive style, illustrate the association-rich conversation between woodpecker and mole. All manner of animal and human being is depicted burrowing, digging, and hacking, sometimes peering through a hole or on the brink of falling into one. There's much for readers to discover, and there are many story threads to spin further. So, just because you can't continue doing what you've always done doesn't mean you need despair. (Age: 6+)

142



Fiske, Anna (text/illus.)

Elven*(The river)*

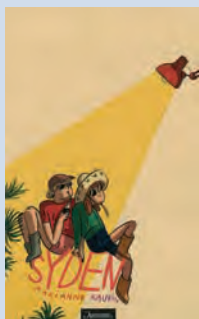
Oslo: Cappelen Damm, 2018. – 138 p.

ISBN 978-82-02-59807-5

Coming of age | Rescue

Winter is gradually coming to an end. It is still cold, but the ice on the river is already breaking. But then Helena and Turid watch a man run out onto the ice. He's not wearing a coat and is carrying a briefcase. He slides a little, then breaks in, and the current threatens to pull him under the ice. Helena and Turid want to rescue him, two boys join them, then the fire brigade, who pull the man to land. The boys are interviewed by the paper and become heroes, while the girls just bike home. Nevertheless, the incident changed Helena. She is more self-confident, more her own person, and less plagued by teenage doubts. »Elven« is the first novel by Anna Fiske, the creative force behind many fiction and non-fiction picture books. The autobiographically-based coming-of-age story is told as an illustrated novel, with text passages, whole-page illustrations, and little vignettes. This puts a new twist on the genre and makes »Elven« stand out among the many graphic novels available today. (Age: 12+)

143



Kaurin, Marianne (text)

Syden*(The South)*

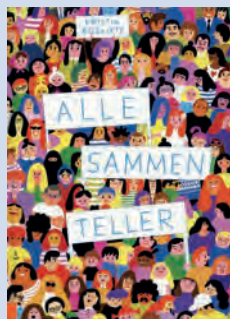
Oslo: Aschehoug, [2018]. – 223 p

ISBN 978-82-03-26401-6

Social disparity | Poverty | Lying |
School holidays | Friendship

Summer holiday! Classmates are trying to one-up each other with their holiday travel plans: Farther away, more expensive, fancier! Ina isn't going anywhere, because money is tight at home. But feeling social shame she claims: »I'm going to the South«. The others are quite sceptical of this but have other things on their minds as they zip off into vacation. Only Ina remains – and Vilmer. He is new in class and lives on Ina's block. At first, Ina wants nothing to do with him. After all, he's just as much of a loser as she is, if not more so – his clothes are even lamer than hers. They gradually become friends, though, and find an abandoned basement apartment where they create their very own »South«, replete with a palm tree and a beach bar. Ina and Vilmer are having a great time, until some classmates prompt Ina to send them photos from the »South«... »Syden« is a brilliant and sensitively told children's novel that shows what it feels like to be poor, with fears always looming: the fear of having one's cover blown, of not being able to keep up, or of being left on the side-lines. (Age: 10+)

144



Roskifte, Kerstin (text/illus.)

Alle sammen teller*(Everyone counts)*

Kolbotn: Magikon Forlag, 2018. – 60 p.

ISBN 978-82-92863-80-0

Number | Imagination | Everyday life |
Wimmelbook | Picture book

This brilliant book can be enjoyed for hours on end without becoming bored. It is easy to lose oneself in and between the pages, diving into each picture and leafing back and forth between them. »Alle sammen teller« presents number sequences, starting with one-number steps, then moving to bigger steps. As more and more characters populate the scenes, the book evolves into a teeming wimmelbook. Stories develop around the characters, stories recounted in a few sentences by a narrator who seems to know much yet reveal little. Sometimes the narrator's statements refer to past events, sometimes to future events, and sometimes they tell of something that's not necessarily visible: »One hundred and thirty-five people at an airport. Nineteen are homesick«. To whom could this apply? Is it possible to visually detect? Or not? The texts extend the momentary snapshots and inspire one to study them closely, as well as to spin further stories from them. (Age: 3+)

145



Svingen, Arne (text)

Midt i svevet

(In the midst of floating)

Oslo: Gyldendal, [2018]. – 170 p.

ISBN 978-82-05-50879-8

Crime | Memory | Father | Son

Arne Svingen is one of the best and most productive children's and young adult fiction authors in Norway, cherished as much by the press and critics as by readers. With »Midt i svevet«, Svingen once more shows his skill at creating suspense-filled plots. Didrik's father is dead. What does Didrik have to do with his death? What is the significance of the revolver he's holding in his hand? Why were there screams coming from the living room last night? Didrik's memories blur, he can't trust them; he doesn't know what to think of his father. Was he a criminal? Didrik's family is no picture-perfect family. Everyone has their baggage and has a hard time communicating with each other. Arne Svingen portrays realistic, fundamentally well-meaning characters, who nevertheless make mistakes, struggle, and fail. Quite like with good old Henrik Ibsen, Norway's iconic author. (Age: 12+)

146



Ibrāhīmī, Payām (Ebrahimi, Payam) (text)

Dalvand, Reza (illus.)

Tak-Ḥāl

(Tak-khal)

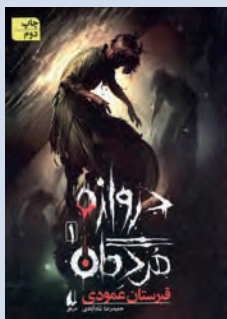
(Ace)

Tihṛān: Tūti Kitābi Kūdak wa Nawḡawan-i Fāṭimī (Fatemi, Touti), [2018] (= 1397 h.sh.). – [32] p.

ISBN 978-622-601-110-5

Sport | Family | Role expectations

For many generations, everyone in Abtin's family was a champion of one sport or another. But the boy bears no resemblance to the rest of his family. He is not an athlete, nor does he want to be one. Instead, he'd like to be a painter. His family is very disappointed with him, especially his dad, who tries very hard to make his son into a champion. But Abtin has his own way to make the family proud, although this way is not very convincing for the family at first. A significant part of this book's narration takes place in the pictures. Reza Dalvand, a highly talented and praised illustrator, shows aspects of the story's characters in his pictures that are not easily described in words. The story encourages readers to be more self-confident and follow their own interests. The book was chosen for the Bologna Children's Book Fair 2018 and received an honourable mention at the Sharjah Children's Illustration Exhibition in 2018. It has also been published in Korean, Turkish, and French editions. (Age: 6+)



147

Šāhābādī, Ḥamīd Riḍā (Shahabadi, Hamid Reza) (text)

Darwāzah-i Mordigān. Qabristān-i 'Amūdī
(Darwazeh-ye Mordegan. Ghabrestane Amoudi)
(Gate of the dead. The vertical graveyard)

Tihrān: Ufuq (Ofoq), [2018] (= 1397 h.sh.).

– 240 p. (Series: Darwāzah-i Mordigān; 1.

Romān-i Nawḡawan; 199)

ISBN 978-600-353-387-5

Child labour | Kidnapping | Iran | History 1910

This is the first volume of an in-process trilogy. It revolves around three intertwined stories, and has two narrators, decades apart in time from each other. The first is a boy named Majid, who lives in the present time. The second is a poor boy named Reza Qoli, who lives in the Qajar Era (around 1910). Reza was kidnapped from his family and sent to work as a slave for a cruel master who enslaved young boys in a haunted and feared house. The boys' paths cross in ways neither could imagine. As is to be expected from Hamid Reza Shahabadi, social issues such as child labour, poverty, and class distinctions, child smuggling, and historical events are woven into the storylines. Reza finally flees his master's grip with the help of a wise man, who is actually the founder of modern schools in Iran and fights illiteracy, superstition, ignorance, and negligence. Majid reads about Reza's struggles to survive in a diary that accidentally fell into his father's hands and finds out that Reza really existed. (Age: 14+)



148

Šujā'ī, Sayyid 'Alī (Shodjaie, Sayyed Ali) / Zākānī, Ubaid (Zakani, Ubayd) (text)

Mayārī, Sārā (Mayari, Sara) (illus.)

Mūš u gurba wa bāqī-i dūstānā

(Moush o Gorbeh wa Baghie Doustana)

(Mice, cats, and other friends)

Tihrān: Kitāb-i Niyistān, [2018] (= 1397 h.sh.). – [27] p.

ISBN 978-964-337-990-2

Mouse | Cat | Enmity | Fable | Picture book

This book is based on »The Mouse and the Cat«, a well-known fable by 14th-century Iranian poet, writer, and satirist Ubayd Zakani. But it is more than just a re-written work. It is the story of a cat continuously catching mice. At one point, a mouse hears that the cat deeply regrets having hunted mice. All of the mice learn the news. To improve the hostile relationship between the cat and themselves, they send the cat many gifts. Nevertheless, the cat eats all the envoys, and the fight between the cat and the mice intensifies. In the end, though the mice are the winners at first, all of them are killed. Like an impartial reporter, Sayyed Ali Shodjaie narrates the story as if it were taking place in the present. He recounts Ubayd's story, changing the verse narration into a report on the fight between the mice and the cat. Illustrator Sara Mayari also depicts the animals in a novel way, drawing on her distinct artistic style. Although the original story was written 600 years ago, it still contains a fresh and relevant message for 21st-century readers. (Age: 9+)

149

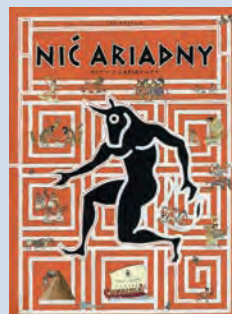


Zarandiyān, Ardawān (Zarandian, Ardavan) (text)
Aṇṣārī, Hādī (Ansari, Hadi) (photos)
Ġangal-hāy-i Māngru (Hārā)
(Djāngal-haye Mangro (Hara))
(*The mangrove forests [Hara]*)
Tih-rān: Intiṣārāt-i Fannī-i Irān, Kitāb-hāy-i
Nardibān, [2018] (=1397 h.sh.). – 56 p.
(Series: Zist-i Irān; 1) – ISBN 978-600-477-041-5

[Hara Forests of Qeshm](#) | [Mangrove forest](#) |
[Environmental protection](#) | [Non-fiction](#)

This book is about the Mangrove forests of Qeshm (Hara Forests), one of the most amazing ecosystems in Iran, which is a sign of natural resistance for sustainable wildlife. It is the first volume in the series »Zīst-i Irān« (Iran's environment), aimed at increasing environmental awareness in children and young adults in order to protect Iran's natural heritage. The book has unique images of the animal and plant species of this region and provides the opportunity for children and young adults to get acquainted with this part of Iranian nature. The author is a specialist in environmental studies; his prose is simple and accessible for young readers. The quality of the large-format pictures are outstanding, and the use of photographs specifically taken for this publication makes it a special work and a first-rate resource on the subject. Beautiful, attractive, simple, and at the same time expert, informative, and scientific – this is the best way to describe this non-fiction book. (Age: 10+)

150



Bajtlik, Jan (text/illus.)
Nić Ariadny. Mity i labirynty
(*Ariadne's thread. Myths and labyrinths*)
Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Dwie Siostry, 2018. – 72 p.
ISBN 978-83-65341-99-0

[Greece](#) | [Antiquity](#) | [Mythology](#) | [Legend](#) |
[Labyrinth](#) | [Picture book](#) | [Non-fiction](#)

Greek antiquity, labyrinths, and Jan Bajtlik! Bring these three together, and the result is marvellous – in this case a big picture book about classic myths and legends. Bajtlik turns Ariadne's thread into the leading motif for the book, crafting a labyrinthine picture for each myth to wind its way through. The myths are also all summarized at the end of this wonderful non-fiction and discovery book. Jan Bajtlik (b. 1989) is a sought-after illustrator and graphic designer in Poland, as well as in France. He became known for his aesthetic use of script and typography in »Alphadoodler« and received a Special Mention at the 2014 Bologna Ragazzi Award. »Nić Ariadny« is counted among the ten most important new books in children's literature in 2018 in Poland. It won the Polish Graphic Design Award in the »Children's and Young Adult Book« category. (Age: 8+)



151

Bednarek, Justyna (text)
Latour, Daniel de (illus.)

Babcocha

Warszawa: Poradnia K, [2018]. – [124] p.

(Series: Latawiec)

ISBN 978-83-66005-04-4

[Witchcraft](#) | [Helpfulness](#) | [Fairness](#)

Whenever author Justyna Bednarek (b. 1970) and illustrator Daniel de Latour (b. 1971) get together, a humorous, warm-hearted and good-humoured children's book is sure to follow. That is certainly the case with »Babcocha«, which has justifiably earned a nomination as Polish children's book of the year. In 54 shorts stories replete with situational comedy, Babcocha – an ingenious witch – looks after life in a small town. Every story is one page long and is accompanied by a whole-page illustration. Babcocha flies in on her hail cloud and begins to handle the townspeople's problems, teaching malicious types a lesson. She transforms acorns into gold pieces lickety-split, humans into rabbits, herself into a fly and back again into a human. She usually helps the underdogs and the less powerful, like a girl named Bernadette, whom Babcocha befriends. When Babcocha has the feeling that everything is fine and proper in the town, and its people on the whole are happy, she speeds off on her hail cloud – right out of the book. (Age: 6+)



152

Jagiełło, Joanna (text)

Jak ziarnka piasku

(Like grains of sand)

Warszawa: Nasza Księgarnia, 2018. – 317 p. + 3 p.

ISBN 978-83-10-13344-1

[Sexual abuse](#) | [Suicide](#)

Ania and Nina were the closest of friends. Until Nina kills herself. Ania is left behind, grieving. She wonders why Nina did it and reproaches her friend for not letting her in, for just leaving. She decides to investigate the reasons for Nina's death and enrolls in the school of art that Nina visited. After she falls in love with a teacher who befriends her, she realizes that he is responsible for Nina's death. He and his friends drug girls and film them having sex. They sell the films on the Internet. Reading Joanna Jagiełło's award-winning young adult novel is excruciating. But worthwhile. Because she makes the whole grief and misery of a young woman palpable. Little hints are enough for this, for instance that Ania grows older (17 years and one day, 17 years and two weeks), while Nina will always stay 17. It also becomes crystal clear in Jagiełło's novel how easy it is to take advantage of the vulnerability of the protagonist. (Age: 16+)

153



Jędrzejewska-Wróbel, Roksana (text)
Rigall, Grażyna (illus.)

Jeleń

(Stag)

Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Bajka, 2018. – [30] p.
ISBN 978-83-65479-33-4

Reclusiveness | Living conditions | City |
Picture book

Mr. Stag lives as a recluse in his apartment. The apartment is everything for him – and so it is not entirely clear whether the apartment belongs to him or if he belongs to the apartment. He uses his car to get the necessary things done »out there« in the city. When his neighbour nabs the last parking space one day, though, Mr. Stag must drive around a long time to find another spot. He is then forced to draw ever-widening circles around the centre of his life – his apartment – and becomes ever more distanced from himself. His car runs out of petrol at the forest's edge. He starts his search for a petrol station, but is instead attracted by the forest, which smells so familiar and cosy. With whimsy and empathy, author Roksana Jędrzejewska-Wróbel (b. 1969) succeeds yet again in fleshing out a neurotic character who manages to escape life's misery. Grażyna Rigall's (b.1970) illustrations marvellously make Mr. Stag's pitiable state apparent, as his existence unfolds in a knot of roads, high-rises, and giant parking lots. (Age: 4+)

154



Carelli, Rita (text)
López, Anabella (illus.)

Minha família Enawenê

(My Enawene Nawe family)

São Paulo: FTD, 2018. – 47 p.
ISBN 978-85-96-01651-3

Enawene Nawe <people> | Indigenous
people | Cultural encounter | Child |
Gender role | Non-fiction

Between her fifth and eleventh year, Rita Carelli lived with her parents, an anthropologist and a film-maker, and her brother with the Enawene Nawe people in the Brazilian state of Mato Grosso. She describes some of her recollections of that time in this children's book, marvellously illustrated by Argentinian artist Anabella López. Since the family is whole-heartedly taken in by the village community – the children even get a second set of parents – life runs differently than before, but it doesn't feel foreign. The clearly demarcated gender roles do, however, cause problems for the girl. Because she breaks from the life of the girls and women, she is soon declared a boy and permitted to swim in the river, for instance, and to play »head-football«. When she later falls in love with a boy, she freely »transforms« herself back into a girl. Accompanied by expressive, colourful pictures, Carelli portrays her experiences in a very lively way and with greatest respect for the culture of the Enawene-Nawe, a tribe of only a few hundred people. (Age: 7+)



155

Gidalti Jr. (Moura Junior, Gidalti Oliveira)
(text/illus.)

Castanha do Pará

(*Castanha from Pará*)

São Paulo: SESI-SP, [2018]. – 76 p.

ISBN 978-85-504-0942-9

Belém <Pará> | Social disparity | Violence |
Poverty | Domestic violence | Graphic novel

Poverty, ostracism, and violence define the life of 15-year-old Castanha, who hangs out at a market in the northern Brazilian metropolis of Belém, hoping to catch a break: something to eat, an adventure, or at least some attention. This fascinating graphic novel covers a single day in the young man's life. The plot is simple, the language raw. Worth noting is the overlap and contrast between realism and fantasy in the mostly small-format, dynamically drawn panels – for instance, in the use of a special colour scheme: when we are being shown the protagonist's hopes and dreams, bright, vivid colours are mixed into the dirty grey and brown tones of mundane life. Especially striking and disconcerting are the child and adolescent characters who are depicted as zoomorphic creatures – particularly Castanha, who is shown as *menino-urubu* (vulture-boy), i.e. as a human with a vulture's head. The clash of different worlds in the microcosm of the market also leaves a strong impression. (Age: 14+)



156

Medeiros, Júlia (text)
Carareto, Elisa (illus.)

A avó amarela

(*The yellow grandmother*)

São Paulo: ÔZé Editora, 2018. – [48] p.

ISBN 978-85-64571-43-3

Family | Grandmother | Sunday |
Picture book

This book is about a grandmother firmly involved in life and at the centre of a big family. Her granddaughter sums up the elderly lady in a few sentences, which suffice to draw a lively picture. The granddaughter's recollections bring to light grandma's somewhat creepy dentures, resting in a glass of water at night, gleaming like white English porcelain. And they capture grandmother's Sunday ritual: how she goes to market, buys a rooster, and, after visiting her son's grave, slaughters it without much ado, so she can cook a meal for her family that same afternoon. This picture book, the children's literature debut work of Júlia Medeiros and Elisa Carareto, offers a laconic, humorous, and memorable portrait that is touching yet not overly sentimental. The illustrations use a mixed technique of gouache, black-and-white photographs, and collaged paper scraps. They merge, as the text does, to create a mosaic of remembrances. (Age: 6+)

157



Mello, Roger (text)
Cavalcante, Felipe (illus.)
Clarice
São Paulo: Global, 2018. – 110 p.
ISBN 978-85-260-2402-1

Brazil | History 1960s-1980s |
Dictatorship | Censorship

»Clarice« examines the time of military dictatorship in Brazil (1964-1985) through a girl's eyes. Clarice lives with her aunt after her parents have disappeared without a trace. Whether they were arrested or fled remains unclear. Persecution is real and always present in this country, where books and films are censored and life is marked by fear and caution, playing hide-and-seek with those in power who are called E.L.E.S. (T.H.E.Y.). The story consists exclusively of Clarice's immediate experiences and perceptions. Because the child doesn't understand many things, but only suspects, and because the secretive, fearful atmosphere that surrounds her leaves many things unspoken and unexplained, the 25 short chapters of impressions, experiences, and thoughts collectively form a picture riddled with gaps. The illustrations do not explain anything either but further emphasize the mysteriousness of this powerful book for inquisitive, attentive, and well-read youths. (Age: 14+)

158



Machado, David (text)
Não te afastes
(Don't turn away)
Alfragide: Caminho, 2018. – 164 p.
ISBN 978-972-21-2960-2

Natural disaster | Runaway | Death |
Rhinoceros | Friendship

Convinced that he caused the accidental death of his father, Tomás despairs and decides to leave his mother in order to protect her. His path leads him to the big city, 200 km away. A natural catastrophe is added to his personal catastrophe: A destructive hurricane and deluge-like rain passes through the country. People evacuate the flooded city. Tomás wanders around sad and aimless, until he meets a young rhinoceros, escaped from the destroyed zoo. Together, the two journey through the drenched countryside and, in the end, find their way back to Tomás's home. On the way, the boy and the animal slowly grow closer without the need for speech and develop a »pretty unlikely friendship«, as aptly stated on the book's cover. The novel perceptively recounts the boy's spiritual and intellectual development by switching between past and present and between first and third person narrative perspectives. Out of feelings of guilt and grief, strength and self-confidence gradually emerge. (Age: 9+)

159



Monteiro, Fábio (text)

Rio, Mariana (illus.)

A construção do mundo

(The construction of the world)

Lisboa: Livros Horizonte, 2018. – [32] p.

(Series: Álbuns)

ISBN 978-972-24-1886-7

World | Creation | Profession | Worker |
Father | Son | Picture book

A child describes his father's unusual profession. While other children's parents are doctors or engineers, his father leaves the house early morning every day to help with the construction of the world. His task is to use a crane to hang the clouds in the sky, while a friend's father, in a similarly important role, turns the faucets that fill the rivers and seas with water. »A construção do mundo« is an original and rather quirky picture book. It combines everyday life and work life with a story of the world's creation in such an imaginative, self-assured way that readers do not doubt the child narrator's reliability. Fábio Monteiro's story also can be read another way, though: not only as an alternative creation story, but as praise for the so frequently underappreciated manual professions. The poetic, inventive text is paired with bold and brightly coloured pictures by Mariana Rio, which capture the idea of the world as an eternal construction site in a charming way. (Age: 6+)

160



Raposo, Inês Barata (text)

Monteiro, Susa (illus.)

Coisas que acontecem

(Things that happen)

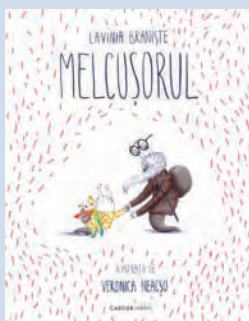
Figueira da Foz: Bruaá, 2018. – 107 p.

ISBN 978-989-8166-33-3

Coming of age | Friendship | Loss |
Small town

The narrator of this noteworthy first title in the new young adult section of publisher Bruaá is convinced that she lives in the »beige-iest city«, which outdoes all others in its ability to instil boredom. Looking back, the adolescent describes how her friendship with her best friend broke down. People say things like that happen. Sure, but does that mean one has to be ok with that? And isn't such a friendship worth fighting for? The novel perceptively captures what makes friendships what they are: it describes its challenges, its mechanisms and the resulting roles, as well as emotions like affection, jealousy, admiration, competition, and rage. The young woman, mired in fear and self-doubt, often addresses readers directly. At times with irony and a refreshingly dry sense of humour, she astutely reflects on herself and on adolescent life – which, in her view, is a not all that thrilling and mostly overglorified time spent between school, bedroom, family, and clique. (Age: 13+)

161



Braniște, Lavinia (text)
Neacșu, Veronica (illus.)

Melcușorul

(Little snail)

Chișinău: Cartier codobelc, 2018. – [32] p.
ISBN 978-9975-86-253-0

[Parental absence](#) | [Mother](#) | [Work migration](#) |
[Picture book](#)

Lavinia Braniște (b. 1983) is one of the most important voices in contemporary Romanian children's – and adult – literature. »Melcușorul« (Little snail) was made in collaboration with illustrator Veronica Neacșu (b. 1983) as a commissioned work for the Moldovan publisher Cartier codobelc. In this book, Braniște broaches a topic that is sadly relevant in many Eastern European countries, including Romania and Moldova: »Euro-orphans«. These are children who are left behind by their parents as these migrate to other EU countries for work and who as a result grow up in their grandparents' care. In a gentle yet trenchant way, Braniște and Neacșu tell the story of a little snail who lives in an apricot garden with his grandfather. For his birthday he wishes nothing more than to visit his mother who works on the other side of the street with the silkworms in the mulberry trees. Together with Grandpas' friend, an old centipede, they craft crazy plans to get the little snail safely across the street. (Age: 6+)

162



Various authors (text)
Various artists (illus.)

Nesupusele. 100 de femei pentru 100 de ani Românie modern. Volomul 1

(The Relentless. 100 women in 100 years of modern Romania. Volume I)

București: Univers, 2018. – 123 p.
ISBN 978-973-34-1068-3

[Romania](#) | [Woman](#) | [Famous person](#) |
[Biography](#) | [Non-fiction](#)

»When women make a difference« – this could be the motto for the community project »Nesupusele«. Five female authors and twelve female illustrators offer 100 portraits of Romanian women who made a difference, who moved culture, science, politics, social life, or sports forward and are mentors to today's generations. The short stories introduce pioneering airplane pilots of the 1930s, nearly forgotten today, alongside contemporary tennis star Simona Halep. Every story, slightly fictionalized, is accompanied by a brief biography and a large-format illustration. Thanks to the number of contributing authors and illustrators, »Nesupusele« offers not only an overview of important women of the past, but also an impressive panorama of women involved in contemporary Romanian children's literature and illustration. (Age: 9+)

163



Astrina, Marija (Astrina, Mariya) /
Rybakov, Iosif (text)
Jaskina, Natal'ja (Yaskina, Natalya) (illus.)
Математика. Историја идеј и откриј
(Matematika. Istoriya idei i otkrytiy)
(Mathematics: History of ideas)
Moskva: Peshkom i Istoriyu, [2018]. – 158 p.
(Series: Mir vokrug nas)
ISBN 978-5-905474-81-1

Mathematics | History of ideas | Non-fiction

This book makes up for suffering endured in maths class! »Matematika« succeeds in presenting mathematics as a great fascination. Basic mathematical understanding is very useful for reading the book, but splendid »Aha!« moments await even arithmetic novices. For instance, it's exciting to learn why and how people even started to count, that there are different ways to count, and that »zero« first had to be discovered. »Matematika« conveys philosophical and astronomical considerations and mathematical discoveries in Egypt, Greece, and China, up to maths' division into sub-fields (geometry, algebra, topology, etc.). Ptolemy, Euler, and Galileo are introduced, too, along with mathematical delights like the Fibonacci sequence or complex mathematical Millennium problems (such as the Poincaré conjecture). Enlightening illustrations accompany the text and whet one's appetite to spend more time with maths. (Age: 11+)

164



Dal', Vladimir (text/ed.)
Oleynikov, Igor' (Oleynikov, Igor) (illus.)
Теремок. По сказке В. Далия «Мышка-Норышка»
(Teremok. Po skazke V. Dalya »Myshka-Noryshka«.)
(Little hut. Inspired by V. Dal's fairy-tale »The little mouse«.)
Moskva: Mann, Ivanov i Ferber, 2018. – [65] p.
ISBN 978-5-00117-476-9

Animals | Community | Helpfulness |
Social critique | Fairy tale | Picture book

There are several versions of the Russian fairy-tale »Teremok«; the version by fairy-tale collector and dictionary publisher Vladimir Dal' is especially well known. The tale is of the little hut that animals keep moving into until it becomes so crowded that it collapses, and everyone must look for a new home. The story has spawned an entire pictorial tradition. In this version by Igor Oleynikov, »Teremok« becomes a new story. With cryptic and wittily ironic illustrations, Oleynikov moves the goings-on to the here and now, giving them an air of social critique. The fairy-tale describes a clever mouse who builds a house out of junk at the edge of a metropolis, inviting a migrating lizard, a worker frog, an artist squirrel, a homeless scientist rabbit, a roaming fox, and a rowdy wolf to move in with her. Oleynikov's tale ends with a »Bear« company bulldozer destroying the dwelling. The newly homeless creatures set out for another place to call home. (Age: 5+)

165



Gorelik, Katerina (text/illus.)

Мишки на каникулах

(Mishki na kanikulakh)

(The bears on vacation)

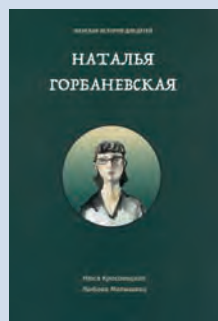
Moskva: Samokat, 2018. – [42] p.

ISBN 978-5-91759-728-7

Polar bear | Summer holidays | Tourism |
Picture book

The polar bears realize they've never been on holiday. Thus, they set off on one. Being total beginners at it, they do everything one can imagine wrong at their vacation stay: They lie in the sun without sunblock, try unfamiliar food that results in indigestion, and become entangled with stinging jellyfish. Nonetheless, they return to the Pole with many wonderful vacation memories. With her illustrations, Katerina Gorelik infuses the plot with marvellous situational comedy. While the short text portrays the rather goofy and naive perspectives of the bears, who are loving their holiday, the garishly-coloured illustrations mock the goings-on: jam-packed beaches, tourist traps, and gluttonous bears who eat other guests' ice cream. What superb vacation impressions! In the meantime, a second picture book about the three blundering bears has been made, where their relatives Panda, Grizzly, and company visit them New Year's Eve. Here, too, fun and malicious glee ensue. (Age: 3+)

166



Malysheva, Lyubava (text) / Krasovickaya, Nyusya (illus.)

Наталя Горбаневская 1936-2013. Моя история – это история меня среди моих друзей

(Natalya Gorbanevskaya 1936-2013. My story is the story of myself among my friends)

Moskva: [Self-published], 2018. – [31] p.

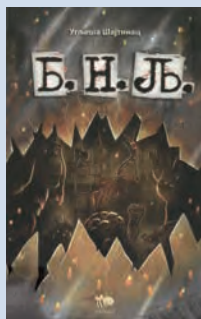
(Series: Zhenskaya istoriya dlya detey)

ISBN 978-5-907051-85-0

Gorbanevskaya, Natalya <1936-2013> |
Civil rights | Biography | Picture book

When Natalya Gorbanevskaya starts documenting Soviet law-breaking and despotism in »A Chronicle of Current Events« in the late 1960s, a life-long fight for justice is born. She pays a high price for it: she is arrested, forced to undergo psychiatric treatment, and must emigrate to Paris. In 2013, she is back in Moscow demonstrating against state oppression. In this slim picture book, Lyubava Malysheva and Gorbanevskaya's granddaughter Nyusya Krasovickaya trace the life of the poet, human rights activist, and dissident. The short, sober text and black-and-white ink drawings tell children the story of a strong woman, whose »Chronicle« became one of the most important testimonies to the samizdat and the civil rights movement in the Soviet Union. This is the second volume of the independently published book series »Women's history for children«, which is being financed through crowdfunding. (Age: 8+)

167



Šajtinac, Uglješa (text)
Dimitrievski, Mihajlo (illus.)
B. N. Lj. (Banda neželjenih ljubimaca)
(U.P.G. – The Unwanted Pets Gang)
Čačak: Pčelica, 2017. – 153 p.
ISBN 978-86-6089-724-6

Animals | Self-organization | Solidarity

A pet store, location undefined. Lisa the dog and Gordon the cat are sure of one thing: something terrible is happening outside. They're right: human beings vanish after a turbulent, undefined calamity. The animals are on their own. With plenty of suspense, this children's book conveys what dog, cat, snake, squirrel, parrot and company are most concerned with – survival – and how they gradually organize themselves into a makeshift community, overcoming their primal instincts. Initially, author and playwright Uglješa Šajtinac propels his beastly characters and their distinctive traits into conflict with each other. When they realize, though, that threats lurk just outside in the form of ranging, hungry animal gangs, the pet store animals regroup and form their own gang. The book was nominated for the Nin Award for »Best Novel« in Serbia in 2017. Uglješa Šajtinac was the 2014 award-winner of the European Union Prize for Literature. (Age: 10+)

168



Tićmi, Stefan (text)
Ja sam Akiko
(I am Akiko)
Beograd: Laguna, 2018. – 95 p.
ISBN 978-86-521-2956-0

Identity | Impression | Atmosphere

With »Ja sam Akiko«, Stefan Tićmi (b. 1992) presents a narrative text that is highly poetic and whose words flow ever so smoothly. Akiko the protagonist repeatedly introduces herself, like a refrain, as if she were reassuring herself of her own existence: »I am Akiko«. She explains what makes her her (skin that smells like old paper), what she likes (her heart on four points – her bicycle) and what she doesn't like (certain words). Akiko talks with wet towels, which answer with their drops; with the Baobab tree; and with her father, who often sleeps poorly at night, has nightmares, and who loves his daughter very much. What exactly is occurring in Akiko's life and family remains unclear, but that isn't irritating at all. For the many little impressions coalesce to create a wonderfully impressionistic atmosphere, which mirrors back the whole warmth, beauty, and melancholy of Akiko's world – no matter what that world is like in reality. (Age: 8+)

169



Šajgalíková, Jana (text)
Olejníková, Daniela (illus.)
Ema a Max. Rozprávka o psíkovi Gagarinovi
(*Ema and Max. The story of Gagarin the dog*)
Bratislava: Literárne informačné centrum,
[2018]. – 77 p.
ISBN 978-80-8119-112-1

Friendship | Family

Ema and Max are the best of friends. They write a book together about how they see the world, since usually adults write about the world of children. But grown-ups don't quite get everything. The two protagonists take turns commenting on their own life and their friend's life. Max, for instance, reflects on what it's like for Ema to sometimes live with Mama and sometimes with Papa. This is because Ema's parents are divorced. Over the course of their charming narration, readers learn many things in passing about the protagonists' everyday lives, what moves them, and what they notice about the behaviour of adults. A big turning-point for the children and their friendship is the disappearance of Max's dog Gagarin, an event both children played a role in. Gagarin stays vanished until the end, though he is present throughout Daniela Olejníková's wonderful illustrations and accompanies Jana Šajgalíková's laconic tale about the growing-up of two children and their great friendship. (Age: 8+)

170



Bartolj, Marta (illus.)
Kje si?
(*Where are you?*)
Dob: Miš, 2018. – [64] p.
ISBN 978-961-272-282-1

Empathy | Mindfulness | Helpfulness |
Wordless book

The guardian of a lost dog asks, »Where are you?« and posts flyers of her pet around the city. Then she spots a street musician and gives him some food – an apple. This is seen by a man walking through the park. Readers follow him and see that he is collecting discarded cans. Over the course of her story in pictures, Marta Bartolj (b. 1979) links many more people and their small empathic gestures, revealing an everyday life in which people mindfully live together. The colour red is the binding element between the scenes. Red defines many reappearing pictorial elements throughout this chain story and entices readers to peruse the pictures again. Conceived to be the practical component of Bartolj's final project at the Academy of Fine Arts and Design in Ljubljana, »Kje si?« received a Special Mention at the Kristina Brenkova Award for Slovenian picture book art in 2018. (Age: 5+)

171



Mlakar Črnič, Ida (text)
Škerl, Peter (illus.)

Tu blizu živi deklica

(The girl who lives nearby)

Ljubljana: KUD Sodobnost International,
2019. – 24 p.

(Series: Gugalnica. Zbirka najboljših slikanic)
ISBN 978-961-7047-22-6

[Xenophobia](#) | [Exclusion](#) | [Prejudice](#) |
[Alien image](#) | [Refugee](#) | [Picture book](#)

This book is like a diary with monthly entries that span a year. In it, two girls set down their observations of a third girl who is different from them. Not as pretty. Without a name (or at least the girls have forgotten it). Not a princess (like they are). Practically invisible, without a home of her own. In September the girl disappears, only a few drawings are left behind. When the two girls find the pictures, they realize that the girl was actually just like them and perhaps could have been their friend. Told entirely from the perspective of the two girls, the rhythmic text shows how easy it is to embrace prejudices and stereotypical views of strangers and to ostracize others. For this touching story, Peter Škerl (b. 1973) offers pictures in muted tones to portray the foreign girl and her family as newly arrived refugees. Text and image join together to form a strong statement against xenophobia and discrimination. (Age: 5+)

172



Skubic, Andrej E. (text)
Šinkovec, Igor (illus.)

Telefon ali Tisoč stvari

(A phone or a thousand things)

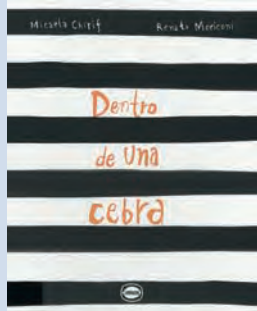
Ljubljana: Mladinska knjiga, 2018. – 37 p.

(Series: Zbirka Deteljica)
ISBN 978-961-01-5248-4

[Stone](#) | [Mobile phone](#) | [Philosophy](#) |
[Impermanence](#) | [Existence](#)

A lost cell phone and a stone start talking. The stone has been lying in the same spot for millions of years, having seen dinosaurs, climate change, and human beings come and go. The phone, on the other hand, has ring tones to offer and only knows of the dinosaurs via the Internet. It also misses its owner's attention. The two talk about life and existence and are surprised to learn of the idiosyncrasies of the other. When the phone's battery runs out, the stone sits beside his mute friend. Months later a boy discovers the telephone and uses it as an analog toy that he only puts away when he receives a functioning cell phone as a gift. In 2018, Andrej E. Skubic (b. 1967), an excellent author of literature for adults, successfully created his first children's book series about a clever trio of children. He here offers a children's book that invites readers to philosophize about the creation of the world and of time. (Age: 8+)

173



Chirif, Micaela (text)
Moriconi, Renato (illus.)

Dentro de una cebra

(*Inside a zebra*)

Buenos Aires: Limonero, [2018]. – [40] p.
ISBN 978-987-45988-8-2

Light | Shadow | Stripe | Picture book

What's special about this book is that its text is hermetic and puzzling, but at the same time open and conducive to many interpretations. The first-person narrator explains that for a time he lived inside a zebra, until the zebra asked whether the two of them ought not »move on«, at which point they flew away into the clouds. What this zebra is – an actual animal, or a space, a location, or a particular mental attitude, an emotion, a dream... – remains unclear. The answer is irrelevant, though. It is this very ambiguity that makes Micaela Chirif's text captivating: No explanation is given, no resolution is offered, which is why readers must define its meaning – or perhaps its lack thereof – for themselves. Renato Moriconi's pictures, black water-colour on white and orange backgrounds, offer no further guidance. Rather than explain the words, they instead offer an artful exercise in confusion of black-and-white stripes and alternating light and shadows that play on light and dark, on inside and outside. (Age: 8+)

174



Machado, Germán (text)

Varela, Cecilia (illus.)

La jaula

(*The cage*)

Buenos Aires: CalibroscoPIO, [2018]. – [32] p.
ISBN 978-987-3967-26-9

Pet | Responsibility | Ethics | Freedom | Death | Picture book

Many children long for a pet, and so it is with the little boy in this story – he wants a hamster. Please! His parents are against it – one must take care of pets, and, anyway, they are not made for a life in captivity. His grandfather is the one to ultimately fulfil the boy's wish. The fuzzy animal isn't flourishing, however, and is not nearly as happy as the delighted child. One day, the boy finds the hamster dead in its cage. The boy feels great pain and grief, yet these also make him reflect. In the end, the boy has his father dig two holes in the garden: a little one for his beloved hamster, a big one for the cage. Using careful, straightforward language and insightful, easily comprehensible pictures, this book reveals the dilemma at the heart of caring for animals. The child's changing emotional landscape – longing, joy, grief, and determination – are clearly brought to light, as are the topics of freedom and duty to others. (Age: 5+)

175



Wittner, Laura (text)
Farina, Marcos (illus.)

Dime cómo vuelas

(Tell me how you fly)

Buenos Aires: Tres en Línea, 2019. – [30] p.
ISBN 978-987-45908-3-1

Bird | Flying | Search for identity | Courage |
Self-confidence | Picture book

A »strange bird« hatches from an egg that fell from the nest. Who am I, and how will I fly?, he asks himself. Pigeons, an owl, an eagle, and even a butterfly bombard the novice with advice. Everyone has precise, yet divergent understandings of flying. This is how I'm supposed to fly?, the bird asks, full of doubt. In the end, he ignores all the tips and discovers his own way to fly. Laura Wittner tells this story with a succinct, witty, and wonderfully rhythmic text, which is perfectly suited to reading aloud. Marcos Farina's pictures are screen-prints done in a decorative, ornamental style, using three partially overlapping colours: bright red, mustard yellow, and blue-grey. The illustrator plays skilfully with geometric shapes, which he combines into animals and plants. The endpapers are also not to be overlooked! Despite the small format of the book, observers need some time to discover all the details in the teeming pictures. (Age: 5+)

176



Giménez de Ory, Beatriz (text)
Ballesteros, Carles (illus.)

¡Puf!

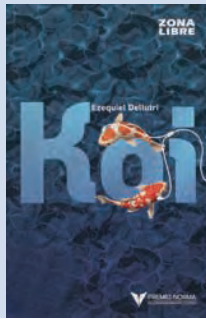
(Puff!)

Santiago, Chile: Liebre, 2018. – [28] p.
ISBN 978-956-091543-6

Animals | Excrement | Non-fiction |
Picture book | Pop-up book

»¡Puf!«, »¡Piu!« and »¡Crack!« are the titles of a non-fiction book series for very young children by new publisher Ediciones Liebre. With their small, quadratic format, made of sturdy cardboard, and featuring a simple, robust pop-up mechanism, these books are very well-suited to be manipulated repeatedly, to be opened, read, and looked at. »¡Puf!« is dedicated to the topic of »poop«. Rabbit, sheep, sloth, beetle, seagull, hippo, and whale describe the specifics of their respective excretions in an uninhibited, factual, and natural way. Sheep, we learn, pop out little cubes, while whales defecate red. And the dung beetle even feeds on the excrement of other animals. The final two pages briefly list additional information about each of the animals featured. Every animal gets two double-spreads and, charmingly, it is only after turning to the second page that we learn which animal is behind the poop just described. The cheerful, funny pictures contribute to the playful, relaxed character of this book. (Age: 3+)

177



Dellutri, Ezequiel (text)

Koi

Bogotá [et al.]: Norma, 2018. – 122 p.

(Series: Zona libre)

ISBN 978-958-00-0656-5

Father | Daughter | Siblings | Outsider |
Autism

When 15-year-old Laura finally trusts herself to ask who her father is, she discovers that he left her pregnant mother because he didn't want a child. That said, he later founded another family, and died four years ago. Coming to terms with her own story leads Laura to her half-brother, two years her junior. Julián is different. He lives in his own world, has difficulties communicating with other people and has an obsessive interest in fish, which seem to mean the world to him. By listening to music together, which has a primal meaning for her, Laura builds a connection to Julián and helps him to somewhat emerge from his cocoon. This novel, told from Laura's perspective in clear, plain language, portrays the budding relationship of the two convincing protagonists, who are isolated by their differences but who turn to each other for support. »Koi« is the first young adult novel by well-known Argentinian author Ezequiel Dellutri and was awarded the 2018 Premio Norma. (Age: 12+)

178



Castaño, Samuel (text/illus.)

Díaz, Fanuel Hanán (postface)

Palabras en mi maleta

(Words in my suitcase)

Ciudad de México: Castillo, 2018. – [36] p.

(Series: Castillo de la lectura)

ISBN 978-607-540-055-6

Migration | Refugee | Homeland |
Displacement | Memory | Picture book

Most people don't leave their homeland voluntarily. Escaping war, poverty, persecution, or simply longing to live a more peaceful, secure life are the common goals that unite migrants and refugees everywhere and at all times. In this book, 15 children and young adults appear on 15 double-page spreads as stand-ins for the staggering number of those who share their fate. On the left one reads the name of a person, their country of origin, and a quote from them summarizing the reason they set out toward a future that is (usually) uncertain. The right side of the spread shows a picture of the person, lost against an empty, white background: While their head is drawn with pencil, their body is made up of tiny drawings and picture snippets. These are the objects and the memories that the people carry inside themselves and which combine together into one body and one life. Composed using a sparse text and an original graphical idea vividly depicting the topic, this book by Colombian illustrator Samuel Castaño creates a powerful impact. (Age: 9+)



179

Panini, Luis (text)
Carrer, Chiara (illus.)
Una cabeza distinta
(A different head)

Zapopan, Jalisco: Petra Ediciones, 2018. – [45] p.
ISBN 978-607-7646-74-7

Diversity | Social norms | Identity |
Self-discovery | Freedom | Picture book

Children's books on topics like diversity or identity sometimes come off as rather belaboured. Not so in the case of this somewhat loopy, profound story, whose text and pictures both arrest one's attention. The protagonist, a boy, has the somewhat obsessive habit of constantly completing the strangest calculations and of dissecting the world into numbers and units. He also has the feeling that he is carrying the wrong head on his neck and is actually supposed to have a very different one. With time he notices that everyone appears to be changing their heads. The child psychologist he visits also happens to be wearing a polar bear head, and his assistant that of a penguin. In the end, an eccentric »head merchant« secures the right mathematician's head for the child. In the meantime, another child is wearing the protagonist's former head and seems well pleased with it. I am many, and the possibilities to be something are infinite | this is the quintessence of Luis Panini's story, whose off-kilter humour Chiara Carrer captures in her diversified and versatile illustrations. (Age: 8+)



180

Rodríguez, Mónica (text)
Varela, Alicia (illus.)
El viaje de Malka
(Malka's journey)

Ciudad de México: El Naranjo, 2018. – 43 p.
ISBN 978-607-8442-70-6

Religion | God | Philosophy | Journey |
Search

Malka's grandmother has died and sailed away on a ship. Malka believes she's sailed to God, and so heads out in a little boat to find God herself, accompanied by a marionette who is her alter ego cum nemesis, with whom she carries on conversations. Malka travels into the unknown. Initial certainties gradually dissolve as the girl learns about different visions of God among different people, cultures, and religions, as she makes travel stops on her journey. Who or what is God? How does he manifest himself and where can he be found? Is there even a God? In this children's book, Mónica Rodríguez dares to pose the most difficult, basic, and intimate of human questions and to illuminate them from different perspectives in an inquisitive, unprejudiced, and open to doubt. She succeeds in creating an inspiring philosophical book and a poetic, highly literary story. Alicia Varela's atmospheric, mysterious and highly figurative water-colour paintings illustrate the text in a congenial way. (Age: 8+)

181



Sandoval, Jaime Alfonso (text)

Ycaza, Roger (illus.)

Los fantasmas de Fernando*(Fernando's ghosts)*México: Fondo de Cultura Económica,
2018. – 285 p.

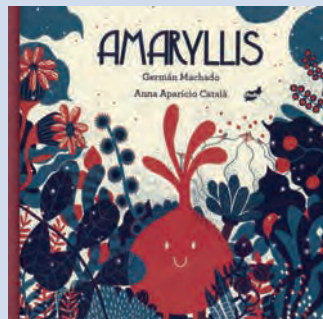
(Series: A la orilla del viento; 241)

ISBN 978-607-16-5851-7

Coming of age | Son | Father | Death

Everything's going awry in Fernando's life. His father left the family years ago, now Fernando's dog has died, and his girlfriend Bere dumped him. But instead of living a lonely existence as a hikokomori – as he had planned to do –, his life takes a dramatic turn: Fernando's terminally-ill father wants to bequeath a dilapidated country hotel to him. Torn between contempt for his father and the prospect of a financially carefree future, the 15-year-old heads to Costaverde with his aunt and »step-cousin«. There he undergoes an emotional roller-coaster-ride, which confronts him with the gaps and ghosts of his childhood and family while also preparing the painful, but liberating process of leaving childhood behind. With humour and strong, memorable characters, Jaime Alfonso Sandoval expertly crafts this story into a family history, coming-of-age story, and thriller rolled-into-one, using clever twists to hold readers' attention until the very end. (Age: 13+)

182



Machado, Germán (text)

Aparicio Català, Anna (illus.)

Amaryllis

Barcelona: Thule, 2019. – [26] p.

ISBN 978-84-16817-47-4

Nature | Plant | Cycle of life | Picture book

A lively creature peers out from the cover of this beautifully designed picture book. It is Amaryllis, a round, bright-red plant tuber, which has a cute shock of »hair« on its head. Amaryllis is unusually adventurous for a creature supposed to rest rooted in the soil. Instead of staying trapped in her »house« after blooming, she heads out into the world with a good deal of curiosity. She wants to have conversations and meet other living creatures, who, like her, are searching for change. After some exciting encounters, she finally reaches a place of rest – a paradisiacal garden, which takes her in and shelters her. The book's poetic text on growth and decay, departure and arrival, and the cycle of nature is marvellously well-suited to its enchanting illustrations. Decorative silkscreen prints in dark, earthy green and red portray nature as a lush, enchanted plant world full of life, adventure, and beauty. (Age: 5+)



183

Marías, Fernando (ed.)

Various authors (text)

Various artists (illus.)

Como tú. 20 relatos + 20 ilustraciones por la igualdad

(Like you. 20 stories + 20 illustrations for equality)

Madrid: Anaya, 2019. – 170 p.

ISBN 978-84-698-3527-2

[Equality](#) | [Gender justice](#) | [Gender relations](#) | [Gender role](#) | [Short story](#)

The title of this volume is unambiguous: It is about equality (and thus also about inequality) between the sexes. Author Fernando Marías, the editor of this socially-engaged publishing project, brings together a remarkable breadth of literary voices and illustration styles. 20 authors and 20 illustrators have collaborated on this book, including well-known names in Spanish young adult literature, such as Care Santos, David Lozano, Maite Carranza, and Gonzalo Moure. Most of the contributions are short stories, but there are also poems, a text composed entirely of text messages, and a play. They concern gender roles, love, violence, dependence, lack of communication, and much more. Whether gentle, reflexive, explicit, or appellative, the texts are well-suited for reading on one's own or in conversational exchange with others. The literary variety is complemented by the multifaceted illustrations, which get at the heart of each story. (Age: 14+)



184

Nesquens, Daniel (text)

Maguma (illus.)

Un día de tormenta

(A stormy day)

[Mataró, Barcelona]: A buen paso,

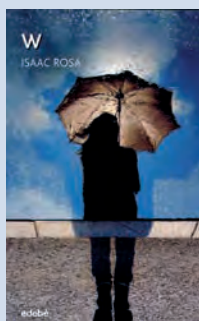
[2018]. – [30] p.

ISBN 978-84-17555-02-3

[Water](#) | [Rain](#) | [Drop](#) | [Picture book](#)

Isn't a raindrop just a raindrop? The two stories in this double-sided book, which can be read front-to-back, flipped around, and then read back-to-front, beg to differ! In the first story, tiny raindrops splatter on the ground next to the foot of a pedestrian and become a heaving sea. Every drop reveals something new: A shiny silver fish jumps, a fishing boat dances on the water, a surfer rides the wild waves. In the flip story, a single drop is enough to flood a house and sweep it away. Floor by floor, its residents and their furniture and other goods whoosh by, until the people find refuge and a new home on a boat. Daniel Nesquens tells both stories in his own, unmistakable way. He needs only a few sentences to unfurl a big story from a small idea, drawing on refined, laconic humour and absurdist flair. Maguma's detail-rich pictures recall the style and colour palette of 1950s and 1960s illustration, which suits the elegant text well. (Age: 8+)

185



Rosa, Isaac (text)

W

Barcelona: Edebé, 2019. – 180 p.

(Series: Periscopio; 47)

ISBN 978-84-683-4109-5

Doppelganger | Identity | Self-discovery |
Coming of age

Award-winning author Isaac Rosa seeks to enter the realm of young-adult literature with this novel, which he conceived together with his daughter Olivia, but wrote on his own. »W« (»double-V« in Spanish) is a highly successful book, well worth reading for its plot, language, and character renditions. The story revolves around 14-year-old Valeria, who encounters her doppelganger. Valentina looks exactly like her but is nevertheless totally different than she – Valeria's mirror image and nemesis rolled into one. This leads to confusion as well as enjoyment, as the two surreptitiously switch roles and try out unfamiliar identities. In the process, they continue to grow, as does the novel, which becomes more complex, multi-layered, and also more serious. It is no longer merely a game, as fundamentally important topics for adolescents are touched upon: identity, self-discovery, self-doubt, and self-determination. (Age: 12+)

186



Kaufman, Ruth (text)

Ycaza, Roger (illus.)

Las onomatobellas

(Onomatopretties)

[Colonia de Sacramento]: Amanuense,
2018. – 33 p.

ISBN 978-997-4883-27-7

Onomatopoeia | Sound | Language | Poetry |
Picture book

Onomatopoeia, which refers to verbal constructions and interjections that imitate sounds, presumably is a phenomenon found in all languages, because such constructions are easy to comprehend and make speech more immediate and sensorially grounded. Argentinian author Ruth Kaufman tracks these human-made onomatopoeic constructions and makes them into the protagonists for this book's 25 stories. So, for instance, there is the »bla bla bla« of empty chatter, the »plic plic plic« of rain drops, the »¡Pum!« of a door, and the »Ra-ta-ta-tá!« of popcorn popping in a hot pot. All these sounds along with »Chap« and »Crac,« »Jo jo jo« and »Ju ju ju,« as well as the similar-sounding »Glu glu glu« (swallowing while drinking) and »Gluglú« (a turkey's gobble gobble) are listed and explained in a glossary at the end of the book. Ecuadorian illustrator Roger Ycaza freely plays off the amusing texts. His pictures, which mostly show animal characters in action, are funny, cheerful, vivacious, and lend the verses extra momentum. (Age: 7+)

187



Alcántara, Mariana (text/illus.)

La máquina de sorpresas

(The machine of surprises)

Caracas: Cyls Editores, 2017. – [50] p.

ISBN 978-980-6573-22-2

Music | Creativity | Listening | Picture book

To compose the most beautiful music of all time – this is what is promised in the user's manual of a one-of-its-kind machine, which the story's narrator received from an unknown sender. He eagerly tries to coax a »universal melody« out of it. If only it were that simple! The contraption spits out spaghetti instead of musical notes, which flood the room and spill onto the street. Subsequent tries fail, too. The machine produces white dice, shoes, buttons, and words, but still no melody. Silence is the key, ultimately – silence that one experiences consciously, which one listens into and makes one attentive to sounds like the cracking of an egg or the stirring of a spoon in a teacup. Universal music emerges from these sounds that everyone understands. Mariana Alcántara illustrates her story about sound, music, and listening with panache and exuberant imagination. Her pictures capture the whole range of the »machine of surprises«, brim full or almost empty, brightly coloured or black and white, with bold strokes or faint, fine lines. (Age: 7+)

188



Manrique, María Eugenia (text)

París, Ramón (illus.)

La caimana

(The lady caiman)

Caracas: Ediciones Ekaré, 2019. – [34] p.

ISBN 978-84-948859-8-3

Caiman | Pet | Love of animals | Loyalty | Picture book

It is genuinely astonishing to read on the last page of this book that the story is based on real events. As a young man, Faoro brings home a caiman baby and raises her. A close, intimate bond is formed between man and animal. Faoro's wife Ángela eventually enters the picture, and it is she who continues living with and caring for the three-meter-long reptile after Faoro's death. María Eugenia Manrique, who met the animal protagonist when she was a child, describes the female caiman lovingly and respectfully. As strange as it sounds, the animal was a kind of substitute child for Faoro and Ángela and a playmate to the neighbourhood children. This story about unconditional loyalty and the love of animals is illustrated by Ramón París on double-page spreads, which seems absolutely appropriate given the protagonist's physiognomy. The pictures, which hint at illustration styles of the 1950s and 1960s, possess great narrative quality and convey the cheerfulness and soft melancholy of the story very well. (Age: 4+)

189



Vouri, Sanna Sofia (text)

Bondestam, Linda (illus.)

Ägget

(The egg)

Helsingfors [et al.]: Förlaget [et al.],

2018. – [32] p.

ISBN 978-952-333-107-5

Egg | Origin | Riddle | Difference |
Picture book

Brie, Maud, and Lu discover an orange-hued egg in a puddle in the backyard. A mystery! »Oh! Does someone live there? Someone little? Pretty please, let it be so!« Excitedly, the three go from door to door in their house to learn something about the egg. The conversation centres around the process of having children, as well as community and belonging. This picture book celebrates difference, without making it into an explicit topic. The text is straightforwardly short, spoken, and a little ironic. Irony also permeates Linda Bondestam's collages, bubbling with ideas. She has a predilection for including little funny and surprising details, which could tell their own stories, and especially her characters are one-of-a-kind. They are unconventional, charming, and lovable, since they never fit into the widespread, classic category of cute. That's what makes them so special. (Age: 4+)

190



Adbåge, Emma (text/illus.)

Gropen

(The pit)

Stockholm: Rabén & Sjögren, [2018]. – [35] p.

ISBN 978-91-29-70101-2

Freedom | Wildness | Play | Autonomy |
Control | Picture book

It's behind the school – the pit. Dug out a long time ago, overgrown with bushes and shrubs, a huge root juts up from its centre. It's the perfect place for playing, as one can do just about anything. But adults »hate the pit«. They are suspicious of the children's wild, anarchic playing. Why? Because! Teachers and parents want order and structure. So they undertake a stealthy night operation and get the pit filled in. All in vain, since the kids soon scamper up the resulting mound of stones, sand, and wood: Perfect for playing on! Emma Adbåge's »Gropen« is a clever, cheerful picture book about child autonomy and imagination, which in text and image humorously exposes the desire for control of helicopter adults. The children win their turf – ignoring adult admonitions and pseudo-explanations that start with the famous word: »Because...« (Age: 4+)

191



Adbåge, Lisen (text/illus.)

Dom som bestämmer

(The ones who decide)

Stockholm: Bonnier Carlsen, [2018]. – [32] p.

ISBN 978-91-638-9433-6

Exclusion | Power | Reparation | Picture book

»Here they are, the ones who decide. Here are we, the ones who aren't allowed to join in«. On one side of the double spread stand those who call the shots, grim-faced and arms lowered. A colourful little troupe is assembled on the facing page, divided by the gutter, looking on with curiosity, but also some hesitancy. No wonder, since they're used to being treated as nobodies. They get chased from the sandbox, and they get chased from the swings, and so on. Stupid, unfair rubbish! Unexpectedly, they are needed for a football match, the ones who are never allowed to join in. Should they jump in, or use this chance to settle the score with the ones who always decide everything? Hmmm... a hard choice. In her picture book, Lisen Adbåge reveals the fault lines of human sociality, starting in kindergarten through professional life and even beyond: Power, inclusion and exclusion, reparation, fortitude, and integrity. (Age: 4+)

192



Brandelius, Uje (text)

Dackenberg, Clara (illus.)

Hemma hos Harald Henriksson

(At home with Harald Henriksson)

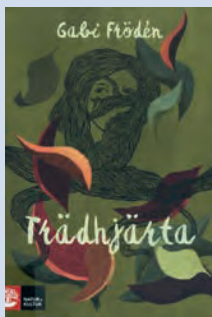
Stockholm: Lilla Piratförlaget, [2018]. – [28] p.

ISBN 978-91-88279-98-9

Poverty | Social disparity | Social justice | Excess | Theft | Picture book

Why did a picture book with the harmless title »At home with Harald Henriksson« become one of the most discussed books in Sweden of the past year? Because it deals with topics that are taboo. No, not sex, death, or illness, but poverty and social inequality. These topics stir deep feeling in Sweden's putative society of equality. Readers accompany the female narrator on her way to Harald Henriksson, enjoying a brilliant interplay of pictorial representation, first-person perspective, and linguistic style that prove initially puzzling, but ultimately open up suggestive new aesthetic spaces. The girl talks of visiting Harald's best friend – which one wonders about, given her long trek. Then all is explained: The girl's mother cleans for the Henriksson family. They have everything that the girl doesn't. And she can't refrain from grabbing a toy to sneak home... (Age: 6+)

193



Frödén, Gabi (text)

Trädhjärta

(Tree heart)

Stockholm: Natur & Kultur, [2019]. – 202 p.

ISBN 978-91-27-15572-5

Love | Homosexuality | Sexual abuse |
Religion | Memory

Northern Sweden, 1975: Karin falls in love with Anja. Anja with the bright, nearly white hair and the brilliant smile. Anja, who is in the Pentecostal Church and smokes on the sly. Anja, who is physically abused by her father, and Anja, who cuts herself. Anja is Karin's friend. But not in the way Karin wants. Anja is with Per. Everything comes apart at the seams one summer night, and nothing is as it was before. Passion, loneliness, jealousy – Gabi Frödén examines these big emotions in her debut novel, in an eloquent and impassioned never bombastic, way. Readers empathise with Karin, as she, a few years later, reflects on her summer with Anja, in an attempt to find out what actually happened back then. As much as one roots for Karin at the start, though, doubts soon creep in: Can one – can Karin herself – trust her memory? Can Karin speak for Anja? Can she report accurately about herself? (Age: 14+)

194



Lindgren, Babro (text)

Höglund, Anna (illus.)

Titta Hamlet

(Look, Hamlet)

Stockholm: Karneval förlag, [2017]. – [32] p.

ISBN 978-91-87207-88-4

Shakespeare, William / Hamlet | Intrigue |
Death | Picture book

To craft Shakespeare's monumental play »Hamlet« into a picture book for the very young is quite a feat! Told using language that is elliptical, very rhythmic, and laconic in its simplicity, this re-telling brings out the play's essential dramaturgical and plot elements: Love, intrigue, betrayal, doubt, grief, insanity, death. It all ends with: »Nu alla döda. Gonatt, gonatt!« (Everyone dead. Goonight, Goonight!). The colour palette is muted, the moon shines ominously. Anna Höglund portrays Hamlet with bunny ears, Ophelia as a fox, Hamlet's uncle and step-father Claudius as a rat. The animal characters that she frequently works with have an alienating effect. Höglund plays with familiar connotations, anticipated by the animal characters but also subverted by them. The book does not avoid the cruelty nor the great tragedy of the Shakespearean piece; as a result, it reveals the play's anthropological constants. This can be unsettling, but also creates the potential for insight. (Age: 4+)

195



Lindström, Eva (text/illus.)

Kom hem Laila*(Come home, Laila)*

Stockholm: Afbeta, [2018]. – [28] p.

ISBN 978-91-501-2009-7

Imaginary trip | Being at home | Longing |
Picture book

Eva Lindström's picture books are recognizable at first glance: the seemingly awkward line, and spacious landscapes the characters would get lost in, if they didn't radiate such strong presences. Wearing a green hat and white tulle skirt, Laila stands in a vast, bare desert landscape. A few cacti and dry shrubs grow in the ochre-hued sand. There's also a yellow air mattress – for Laila: »You receive an air mattress, a sea, a path«. In this book two perspectives intertwine in a suspenseful way. While the pictures illustrate Laila and her point of view, the text is spoken by an invisible narrator who wants Laila to come home. The words are like a bridge, and so readers follow Laila on her way through (her imaginary) deserts, forests, mountains, and seas. She always looks optimistic. She is fearless. (Age: 4+)

196



Albayrak, Eda (text)

Lâf Ebesi. Sözün ustaları*(Chatterbox. Masters of the word)*

İstanbul: abm, 2018. – 134 p.

ISBN 978-605-2374-50-4

Language | Speaking | Idiom | Word | School |
Philosophy of language

This book follows fifth graders as they philosophize on language both plain and intricate and attend to the structures of homonyms, idioms, and metaphors. The playful talk and internal questioning occupy children at home and school as they increasingly pay attention to the meanings of the simplest of words, such as »new« or »end«, and their diverse uses. An experimental class based on »thought« further fires up their debates as they consider concepts such as knowledge and relativity. The critical thinking and logic they are introduced to lead to lively exchanges that support developing a deeper understanding of themselves and their peers. Questions at the end of every chapter of this book inspire mindful thinking as they invite children to deliberate on words and their diverse uses. The success of these exchanges leads to a group of students being selected for a wordplay tournament, competing with groups from three other schools. This reading encourages a closer look at the inherent polysemy of language used every day and how it may be a vehicle for ludic language use. (Age: 8+)

SWEDISH
TURKISHSweden
Turkey

197



Üçbaşaran, Deniz (illus.)

Annemin İçindeki Ses

(*The hum inside my mom*)

İstanbul: Hep Kitap, 2018. – [36] p.

ISBN 978-605-192-255-3

Pregnancy | Siblings | Mother | Newborn |
Sharing | Wordless book | Picture book

This wordless picture book, created by award-winning illustrator Deniz Üçbaşaran, depicts a child envisioning his baby sister who will soon join the family. He is shown communing with his in-utero sister by caressing his mother's belly and listening to the baby's movements. The book's subtle organic images symbolically express the delicate emergence of a new life and a new relationship. Soothing pastel colours, mainly blue, green, and yellow, paint the child's poetic daydreams of a future of harmonious play with his sister after she has grown a little. They climb a tree, play with bubbles, and dream up fantasy worlds where they can fly. Üçbaşaran's use of vast blank spaces in each of the compositions builds a complementary bond between the images and the story, which hint at the boy's as yet unrealized future expectations that his sister's arrival will fulfil. The universally understood message in this work is the peaceful enrichment a sibling can bring to a child's life. (Age: 3+)

198



Bula, Oksana (text/illus.)

Tukoni – meşkanec' lisu

(*Tukoni – meshkanec lisu*)

(*Tukoni – the forest habitant*)

L'viv: Vydavnytvo Staroho Leva, 2018. – [38] p.

ISBN 978-617-679-492-9

Forest | Habitat | Nature | Fictional creature |
Guardianship | Picture book

Illustrator Oksana Bula (b. 1989) is frequently noted in the Ukraine for her gentle, nature-embedded picture book worlds. She has received awards for her books about trees, plants, bison, and bear. Her previous books have already introduced readers to representatives of the »Tukoni«, a mysterious species of animal that lives in the forest. Now, these are protagonists with a unique story: they are calm, mindful creatures who take care of trees, flowers, forest animals, and the change of seasons. The Tukoni seem like the guardians of this world and preserve its vitality and peaceable quality. Oksana Bula links her picture book stories together using animal protagonists, who communicate with each other. The actual protagonists are, however, nature and the magic of the forest, in which all life plays out and which is worth celebrating as an astonishing world in its own right. (Age: 3+)

199



Vdovyčenko, Halyna (Vdovychenko, Halyna) (text)
 Lukaščuk, Chrystyna (Lukashchuk, Khrystyna) (illus.)
Sova, jaka chotila staty žajvoronkom
 (Sova, yaka khotila staty zhayvoronkom)
 (The owl who wanted to become a lark)
 Černivci: Čorni vivci (Chorny Vivci), [2017]. – [48] p.
 ISBN 978-617-614-164-8

Diversity | Otherness | Friendship |
 Picture book

Lark raves to her friend Owl about how great it is to fly around during the day, to enjoy the sun and to sing with the other birds. Owl thinks: I want to do that, too! But after quitting her nocturnal life, she soon realizes that her new circumstances are too loud, too bright and too lively. Not to mention that she sees poorly by day and can't catch a thing to eat. In the end it makes good sense that Owl is active at night, and Lark by day. They stay friends nonetheless! Halyna Vdovychenko (b. 1959) is a busy, very successful author, especially cherished for her children's books about an agile cat troupe. With Khrystyna Lukashchuk (b. 1972), she describes in »Sova« how friends can be very different from each other and each great in their own way, just as they are. The book is published by Chorny Vivci Press and was awarded in 2018. (Age: 3+)

200



Nguyễn, Đình Thi (text)
 Thùy, Dung (illus.)
Cái tết của mèo con
 (The kitten's Tết Festival)
 Hà Nội: Nhà Xuất Bản Kim Đồng (Kim Dong Publishing House), 2018. – 44 p.
 ISBN 978-604-2-10941-3

Vietnam | New Year | Tết Festival | Cat |
 Fear | Courage | Growing up

Miu the kitten experiences the New Year's festival Tết, the most important Vietnamese holiday, for the first time. In his new home, his task is to get rid of a plague of mice, but the marauding mice and the smelly sewer rat only taunt him. It isn't until after he proves his bravery when fighting an evil cobra, that he dares to enter the battle. Assisted by Auntie Corn Broom and Uncle Copper Pot, Miu defeats the huge rat. Thus, he earns his place in the family and is allowed to join in their visit to the family grave on New Year's morning. This story, a lesson in courage and solidarity, has also been interpreted as a metaphor for the struggle of the three Indo-Chinese countries against their colonial masters and invaders during the Vietnam War. Nguyễn Đình Thi (1924-2003), one of the most well-known Vietnamese authors, literary critics, and composers, wrote his only children's book in 1961 as a present for his own children. For the 60th anniversary of the publishing house Kim Đồng, Thùy Dung created new illustrations for this story. (Age: 8+)

UKRAINIAN
 VIETNAMESE

Ukraine
 Vietnam

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