



**United States Board on Books for Young People**  
*Building Bridges Through Children's and Young Adult Books*

# The 2020 USBY Outstanding International Books List

# OIB List Goal

The goal of this project is to produce an annual list of outstanding international books for children and young adults, grades PreK-12.

For this list, the term "international book" is used to describe a book published or distributed in the U.S. that originated or was first published in a country other than the U.S.

# 2020 USBBY Outstanding International Books Committee

Anamaría Anderson (Assistant Chair) - Arlington, VA

Bettie Parsons Barger - Charlotte, NC

Susan Corapi - Lake Zurich, IL

Deanna Day - Vancouver, WA

Patrick Gall (Chair) - Evanston, IL

Doris Gebel - Melfa, VA

Amy McClure - Dublin, OH

Mary Napoli - Hummelstown, PA

Quentin Russell - Athens, OH



# OIB List Criteria

The committee looks for international books that:

- represent the best of children's literature from other countries
- introduce readers in the U.S. to outstanding artists and writers from other countries
- help children in the U.S. see the world from other points of view
- provide a perspective or address a topic otherwise missing from children's literature in the U.S.
- exhibit a distinct cultural flavor
- are accessible to readers in the U.S.

# OIB List Criteria

The committee evaluates international books by the following elements:

- artistic and literary merit
- originality or creativity of approach
- distinctiveness of topic
- uniqueness of origin
- qualities that engage and appeal to children

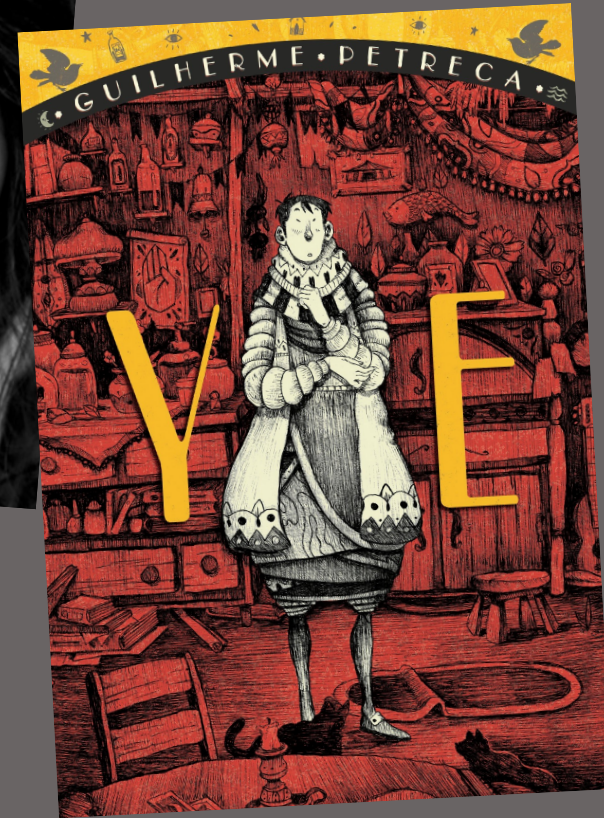
# The 2020 Outstanding International Books List is the 15<sup>th</sup> annual list!

All books on the 2020 OIB List were published or released in 2019.

Country names in parentheses indicate where a book was first or simultaneously published. Information after a slash indicates when the setting of a title definitively differs from its country of origin.

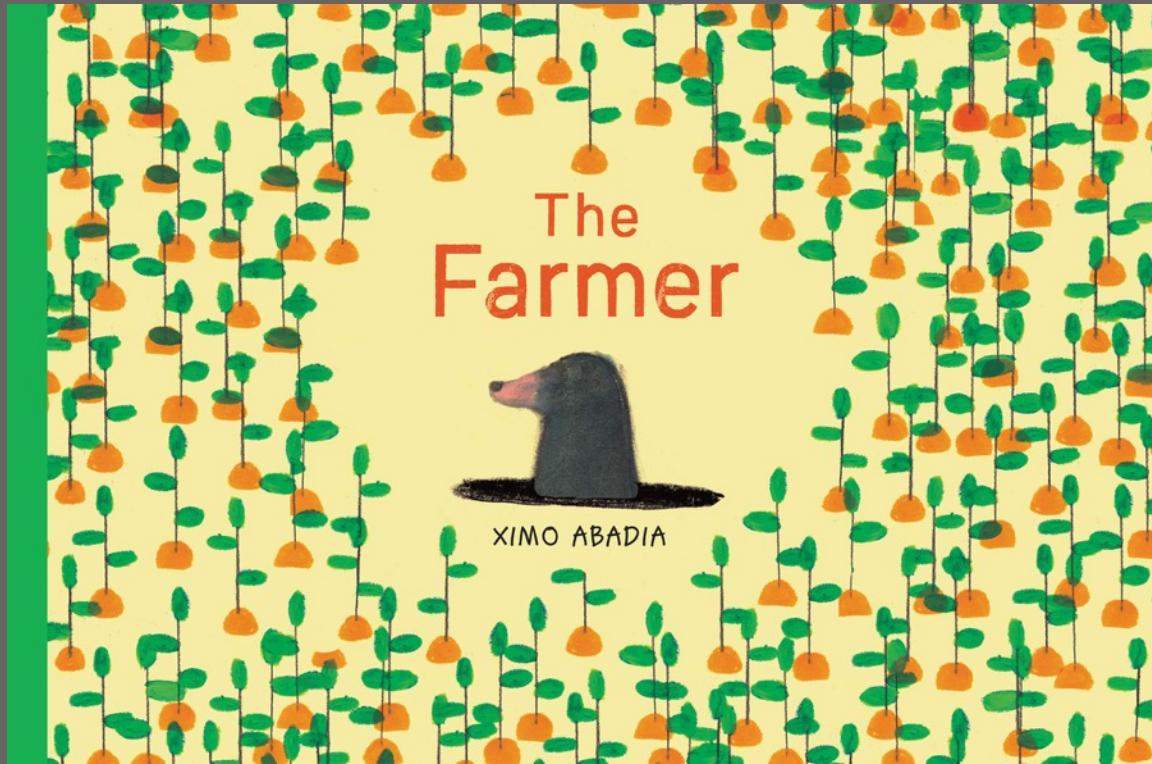
For more information, visit [www.usbby.org](http://www.usbby.org).

# Challenging Stereotypes & Social Norms



Curated by 2020 OIB committee member **Bettie Parsons Barger**

Grades PreK-2



Ximo Abadia

*The Farmer*

Trans. by

Grace Maccarone

& Kelly Loughman

Illus. by

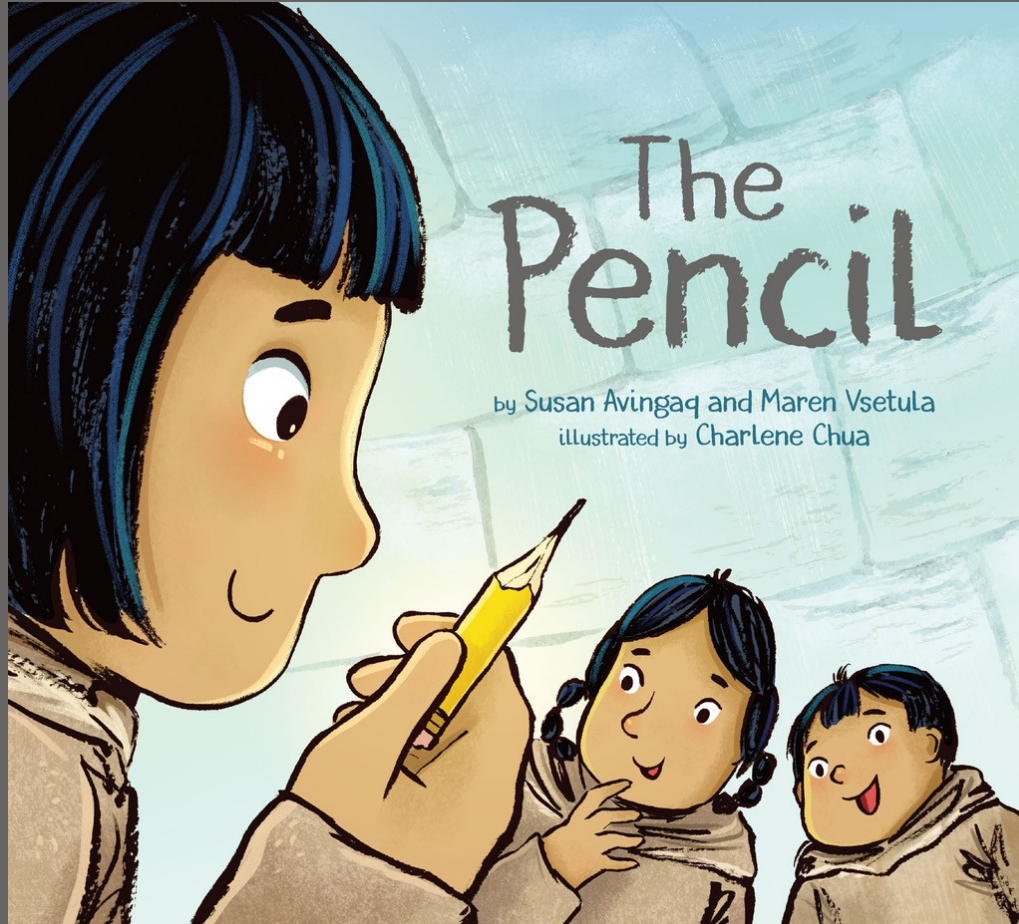
Ximo Abadia

**Holiday House**

(Switzerland)



Grades PreK-2



Susan Avingaq  
& Maren Vsetula

*The Pencil*

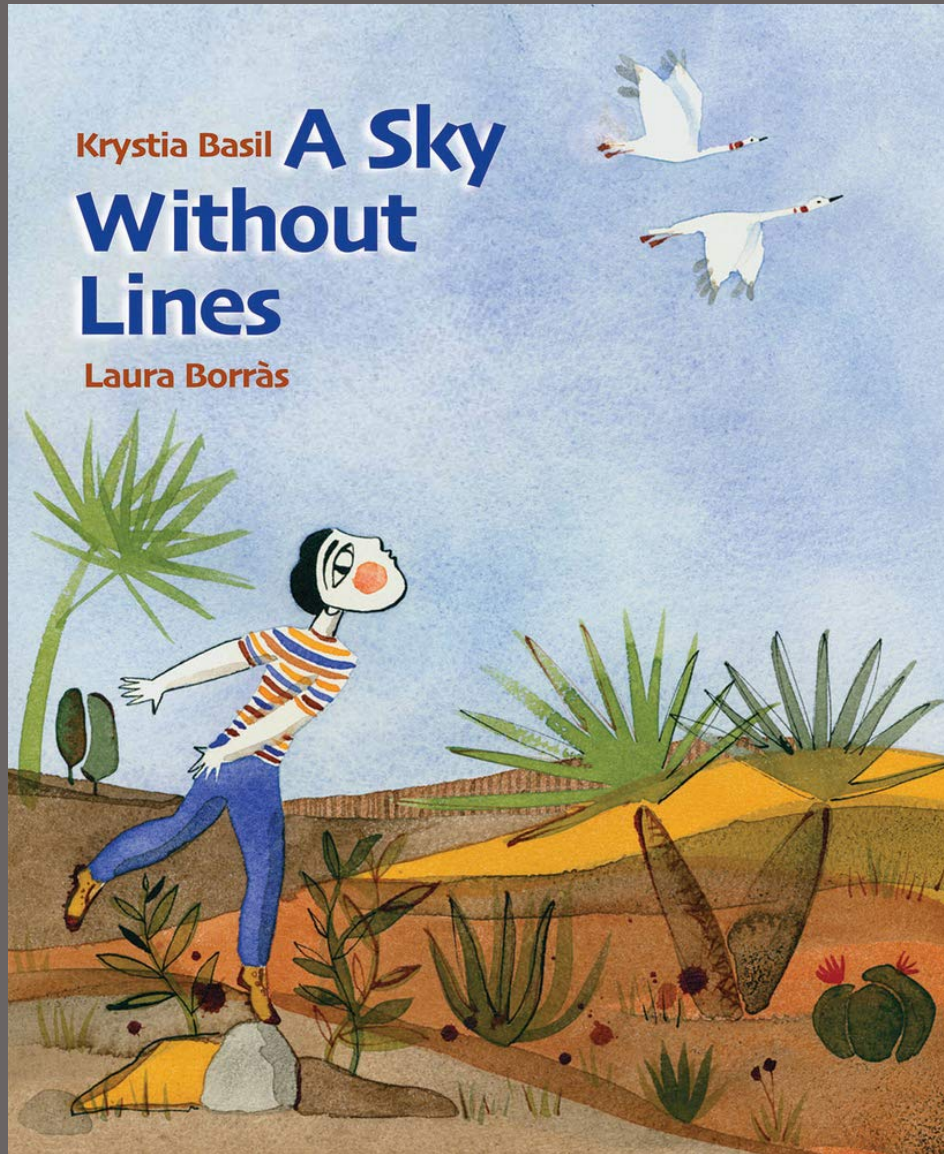
Illus. by

Charlene Chua

Inhabit Media

(Canada)

Grades PreK-2



Krystia Basil  
*A Sky Without Lines*  
Illus. by Laura Borràs  
**minedition**  
(Hong Kong/set along  
the US/Mexico border)

Grades PreK-2



Natalia Chernysheva

*The Return*

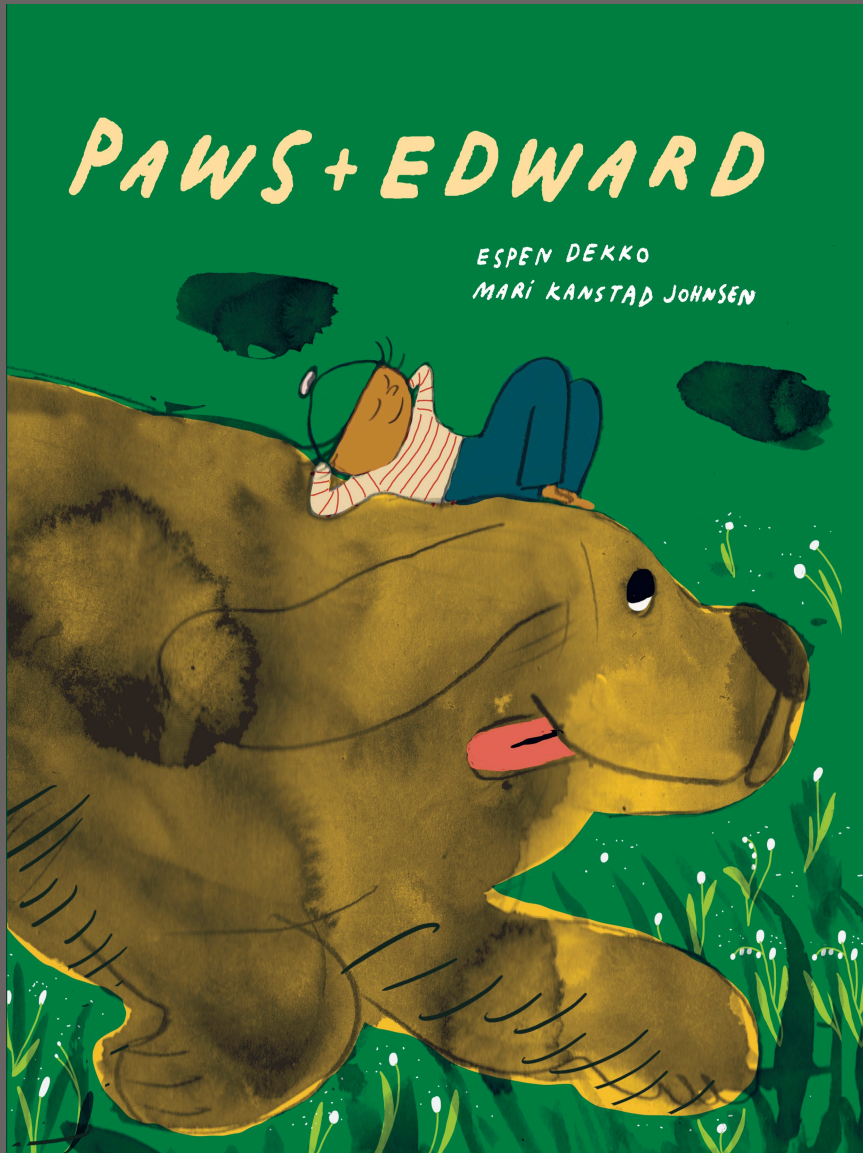
Illus. by

Natalia Chernysheva

**Groundwood Books**

(Portugal)

Grades PreK-2



Espen Dekko

***Paws+Edward***

Trans. by

Kids Can Press

Illus. by

Mari Kanstad Johnsen

**Kids Can Press**

(Norway)

# Grades PreK-2



Julie Flett

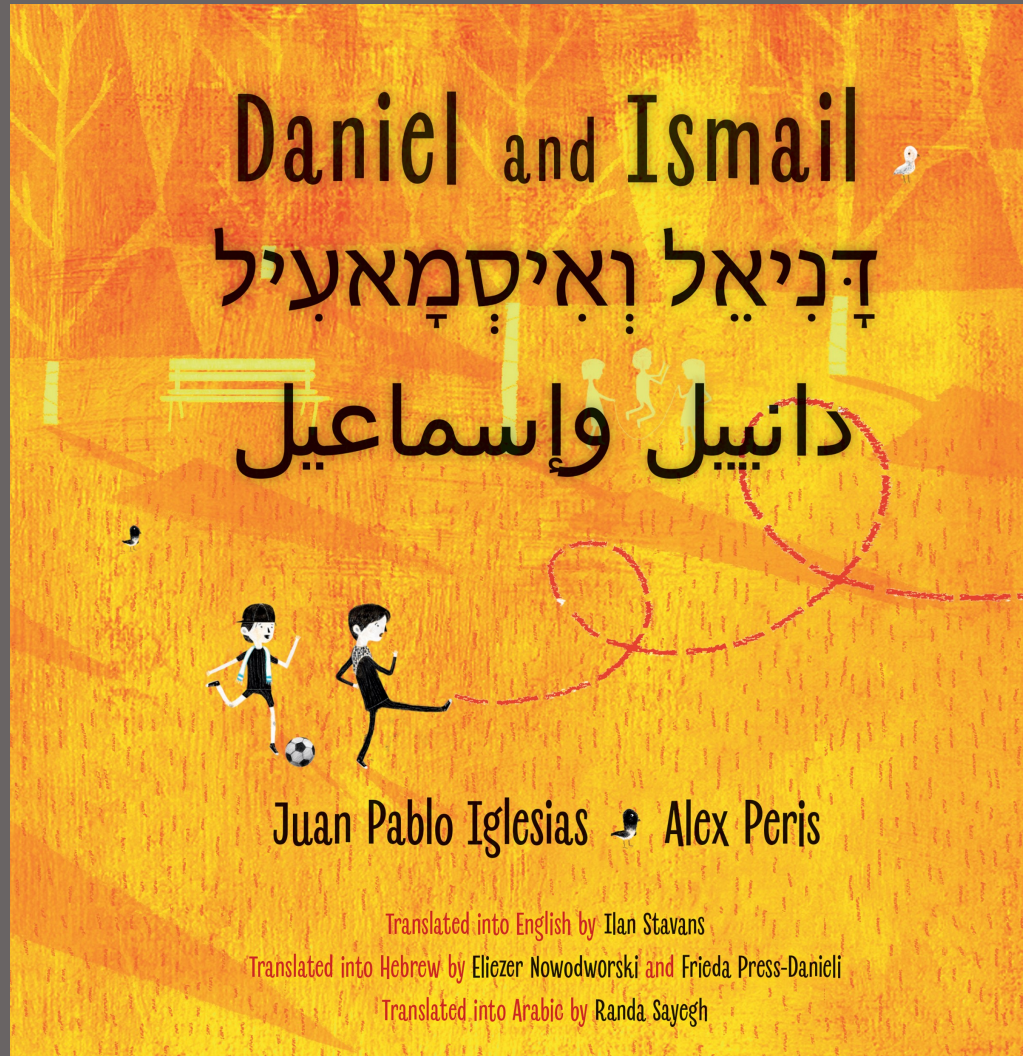
*Birdsong*

Illus. by Julie Flett

**Greystone Kids**

(Canada)

# Grades PreK-2



Juan Pablo Iglesias

***Daniel and Ismail***

Trans. by Ilan Stavans;

Eliezer Nowodworski

& Frieda Press-Danieli;

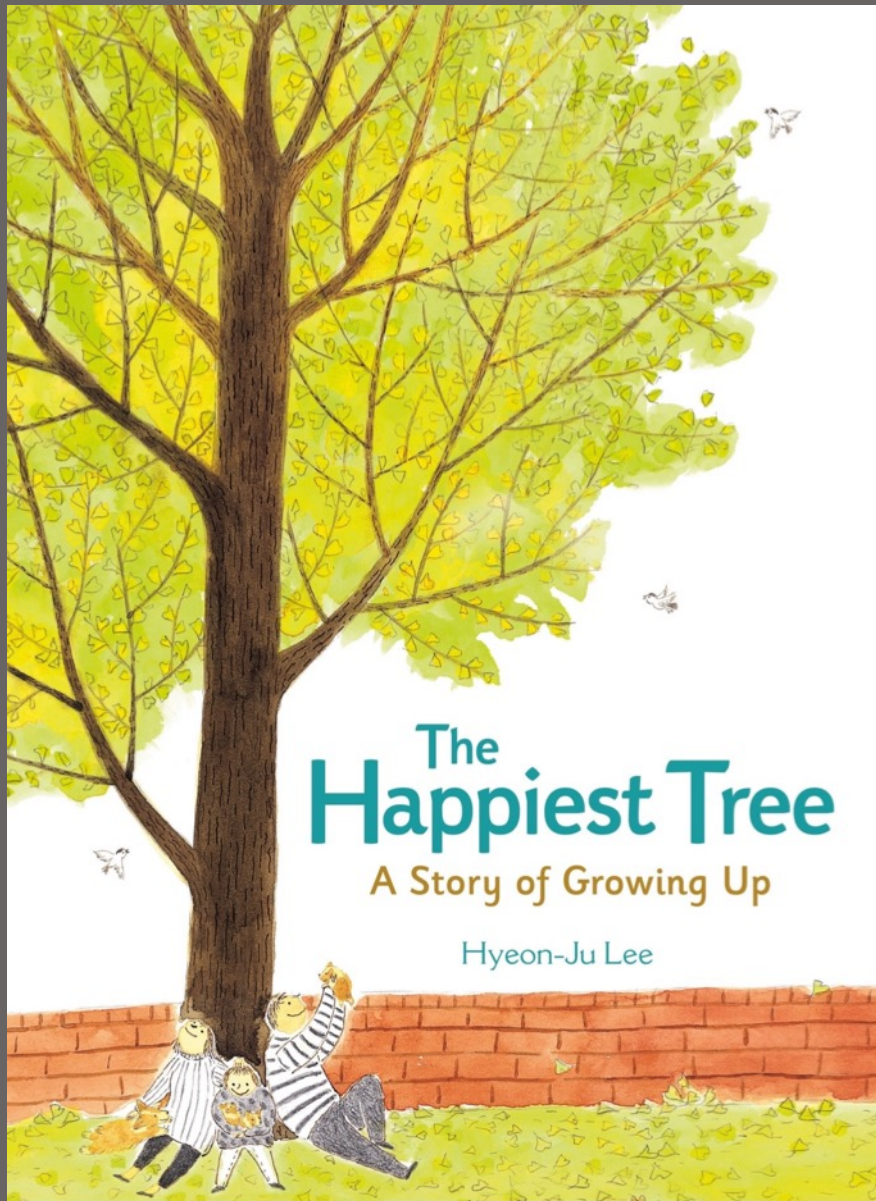
Randa Sayegh

Illus. by Alex Peris

**Yonder**

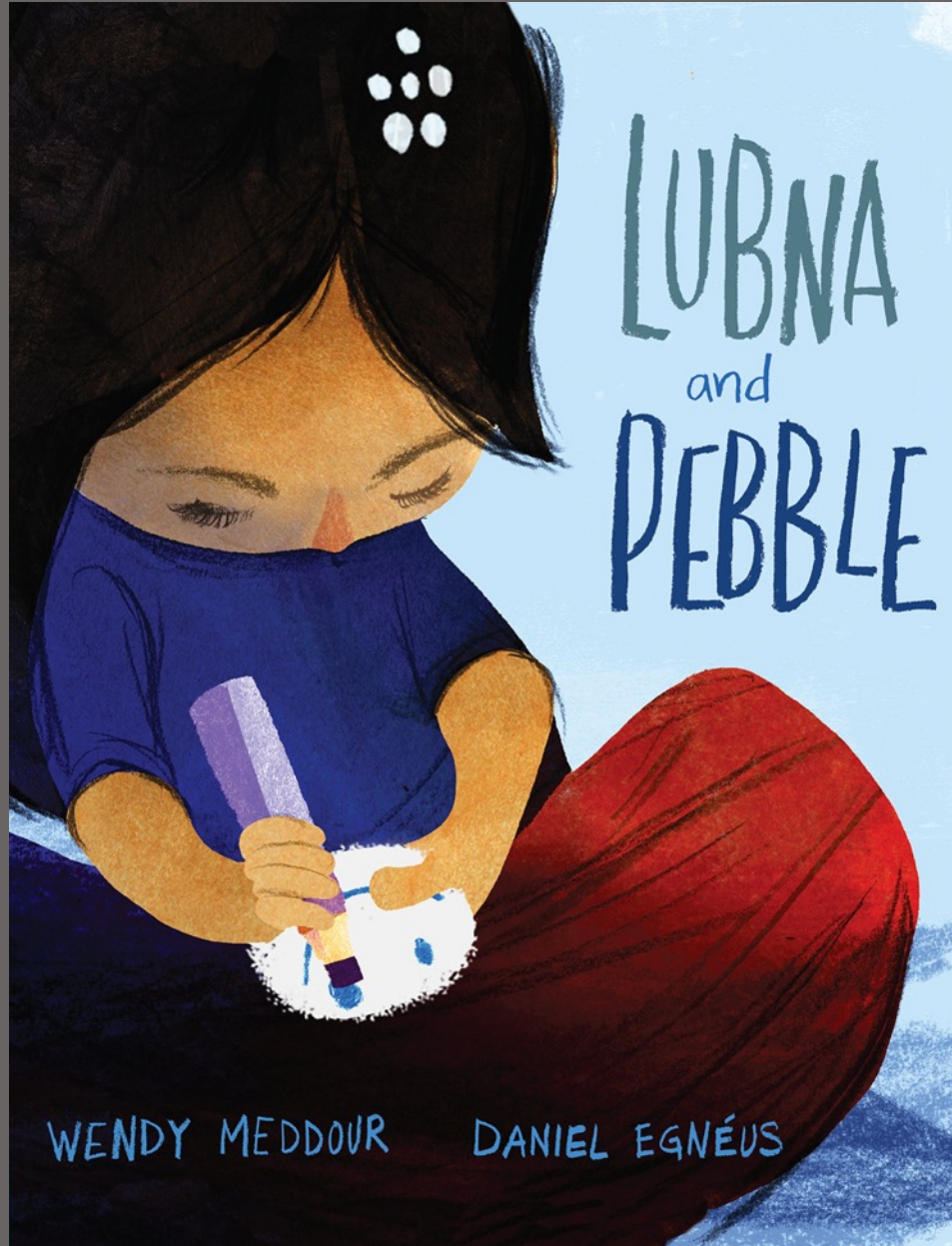
(Chile)

Grades PreK-2



Hyeon-Ju Lee  
*The Happiest Tree:  
A Story of Growing Up*  
Illus. Hyeon-Ju Lee  
Feiwel and Friends  
(Korea)

Grades PreK-2



Wendy Meddour

*Lubna and Pebble*

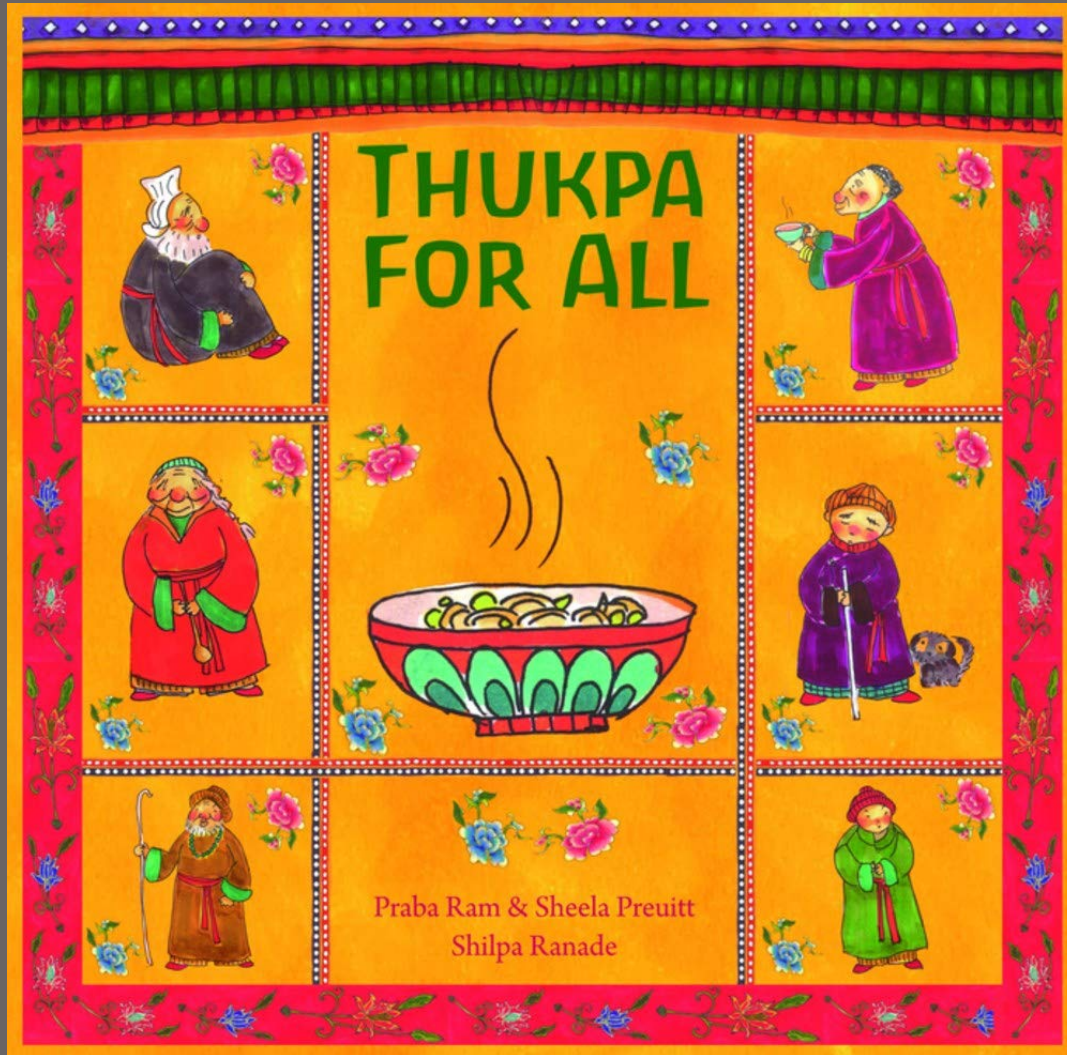
Illus. by Daniel Egnéus

**Dial Books for  
Young Readers**

(UK)



Grades PreK-2



Praba Ram  
& Sheela Preuitt  
*Thukpa for All*

Illus. by  
Shilpa Ranade  
Karadi Tales

Company

(India)

Grades PreK-2

# One Fox

A COUNTING BOOK THRILLER



Kate  
Read

Kate Read

**One Fox:**

***A Counting Book  
Thriller***

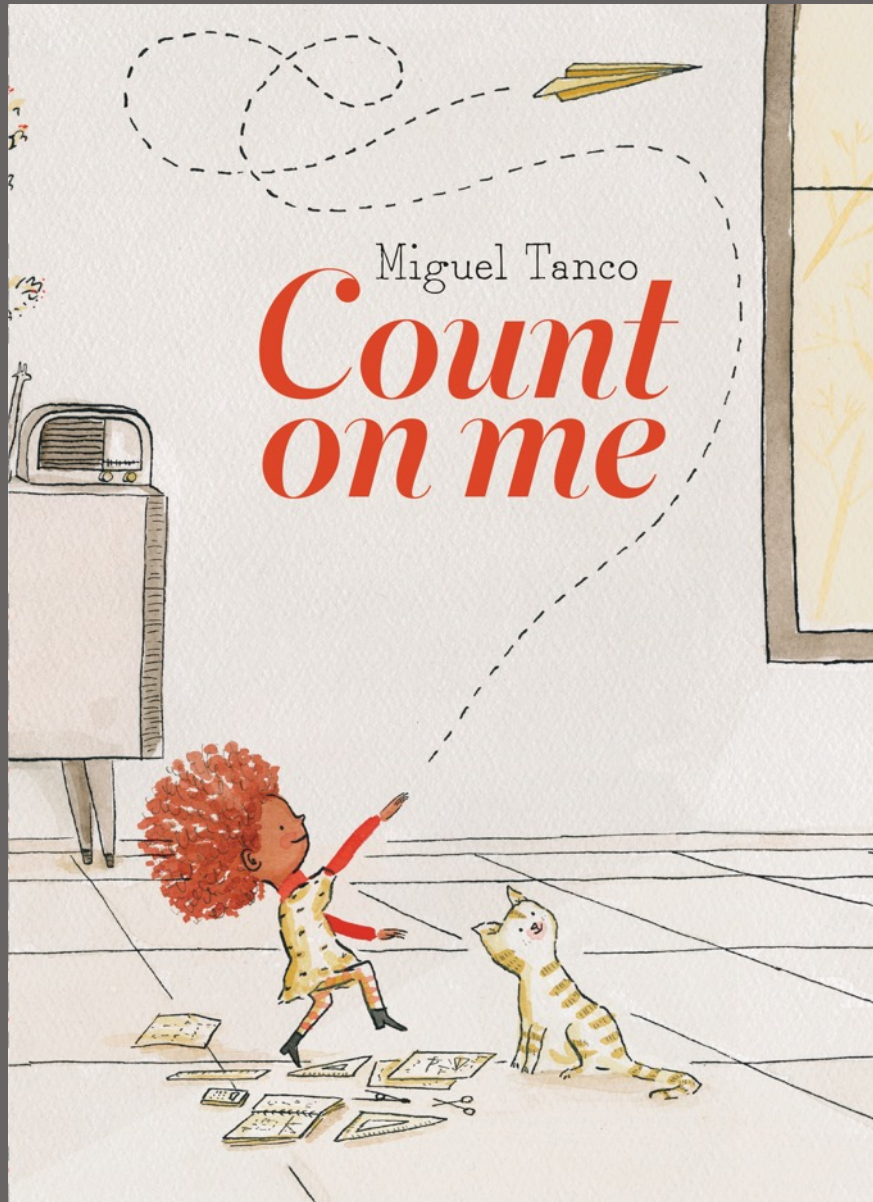
Illus. by Kate Read

**Peachtree**

**Publishing Company**

**(UK)**

Grades PreK-2



Miguel Tanco  
*Count on Me*

Illus. by Miguel Tanco

**Tundra Books**

(Canada)

Grades PreK-2

# THE GIRL AND THE WOLF



WORDS BY Katherena Vermette  
PICTURES Julie Flett

Katherena Vermette

*The Girl  
and the Wolf*

Illus. by Julie Flett

**Theytus Books**

(Canada)

Grades PreK-2

Fernando Vilela

*Along the Tapajós*

Trans. by

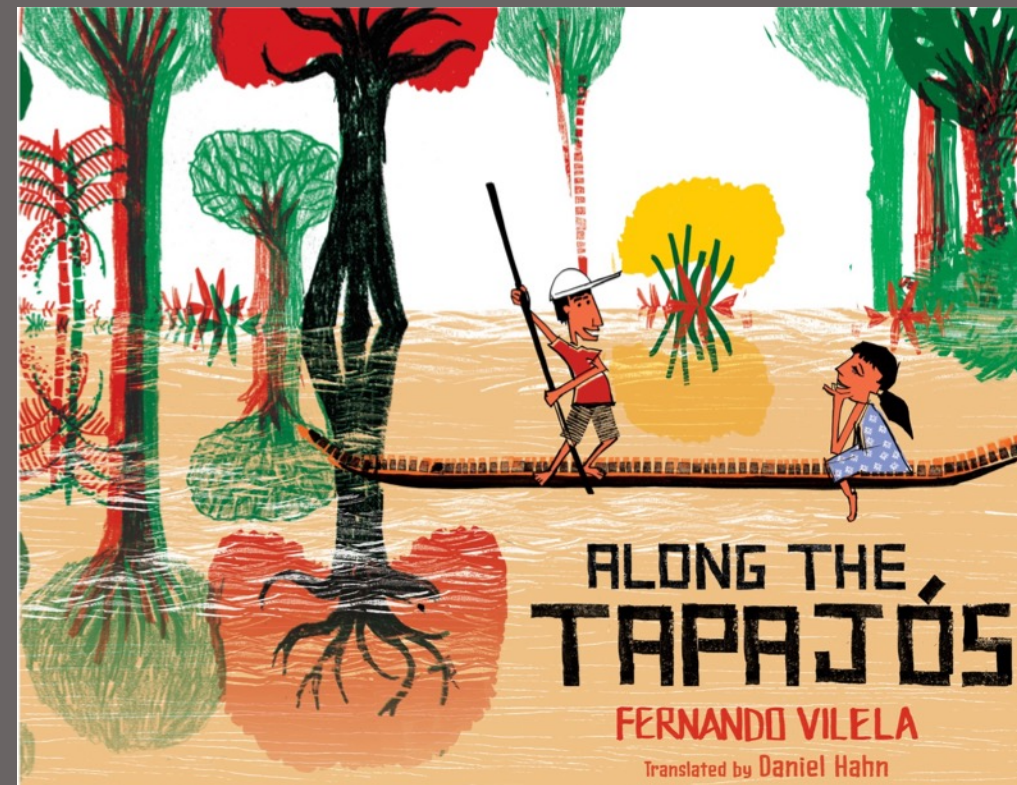
Daniel Hahn

Illus. by

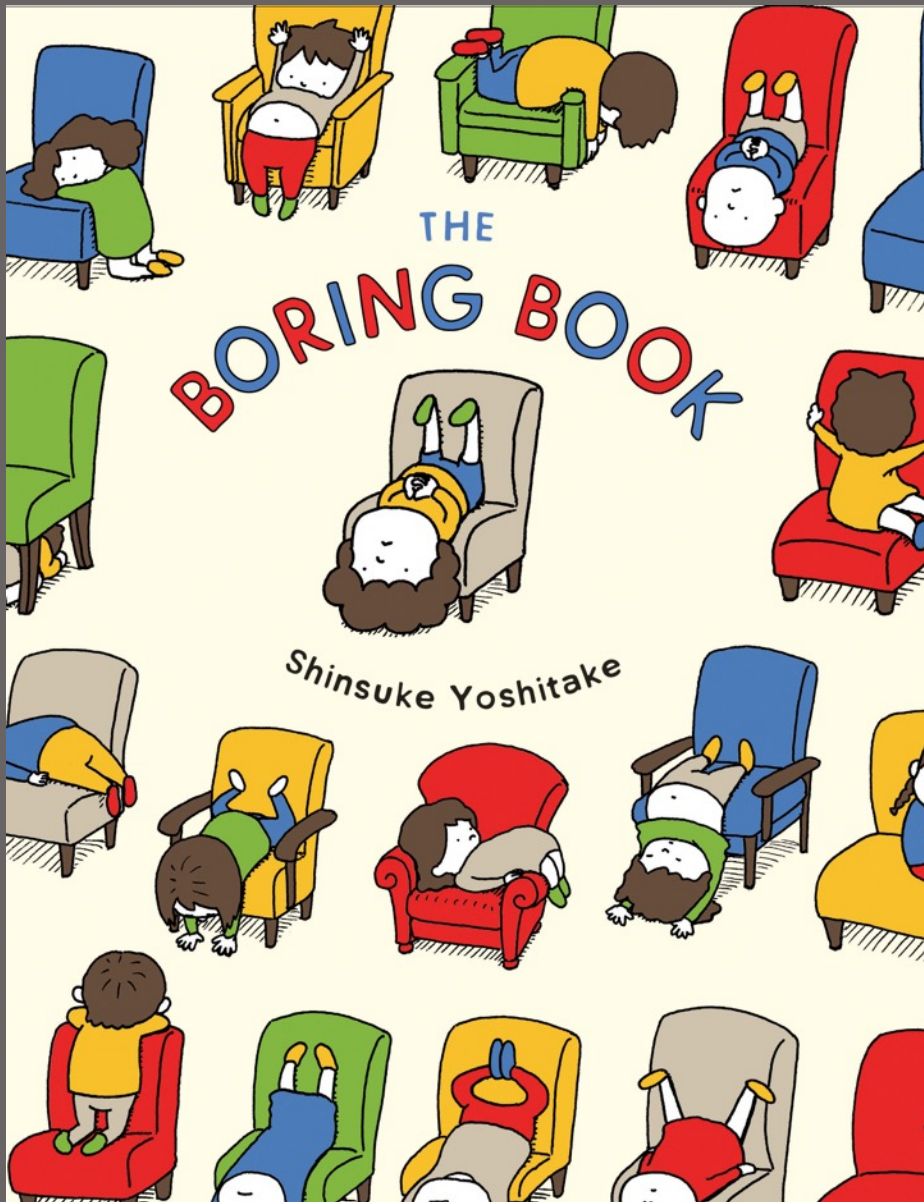
Fernando Vilela

**Amazon Crossing Kids**

(Brazil)



Grades PreK-2



Shinsuke Yoshitake

*The Boring Book*

Ed. by

Naomi Kirsten

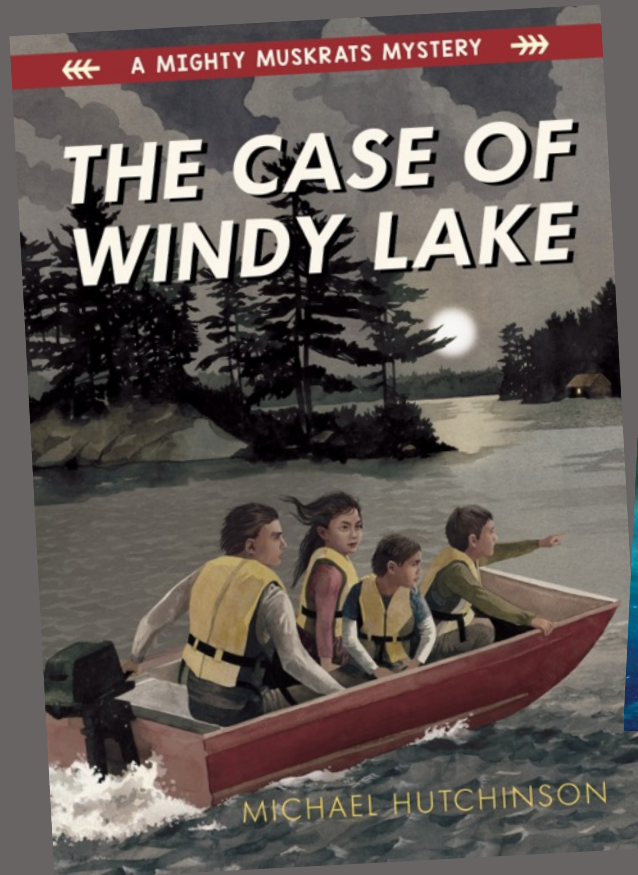
Illus. by

Shinsuke Yoshitake

**Chronicle Books**

(Japan)

# Solving Mysteries



Curated by 2020 OIB committee member **Susan Corapi**

Grades 3-5

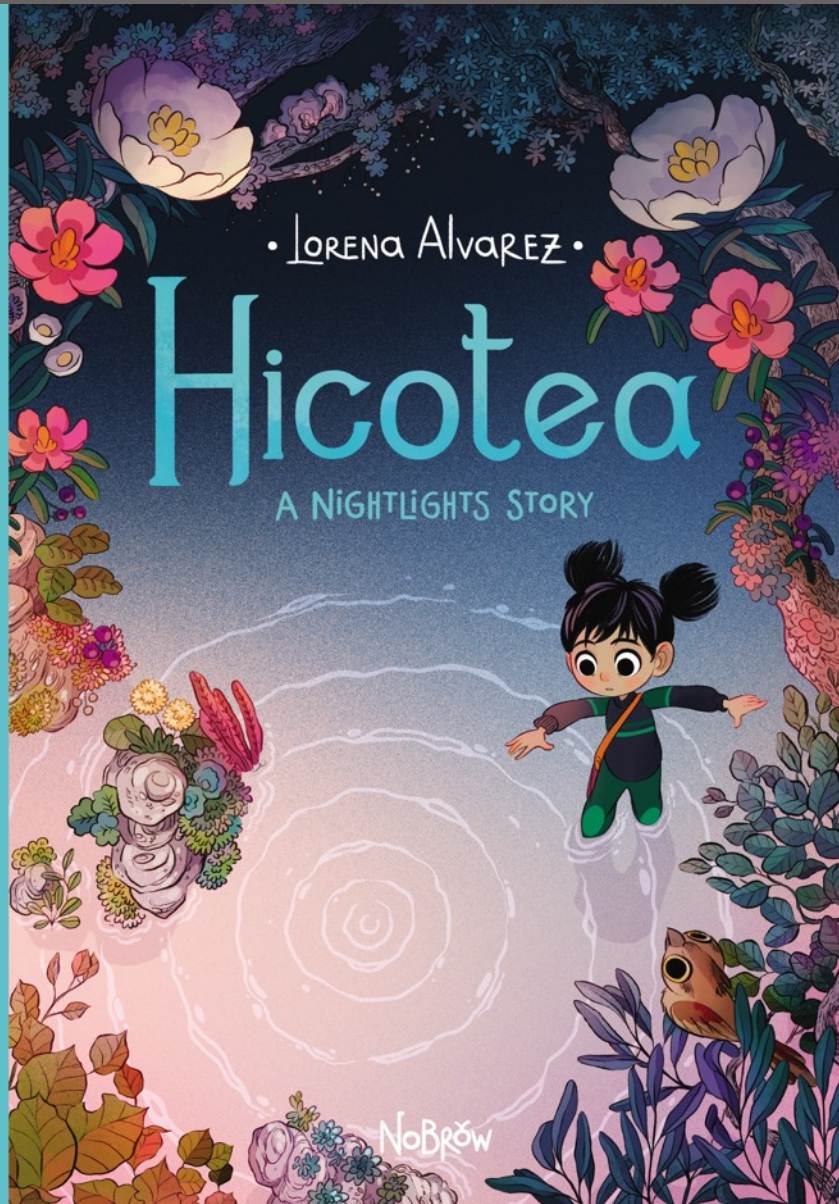


Deborah Abela

*The Most Marvelous  
International Spelling Bee*  
Sourcebooks Jabberwocky  
(Australia)



Grades 3-5

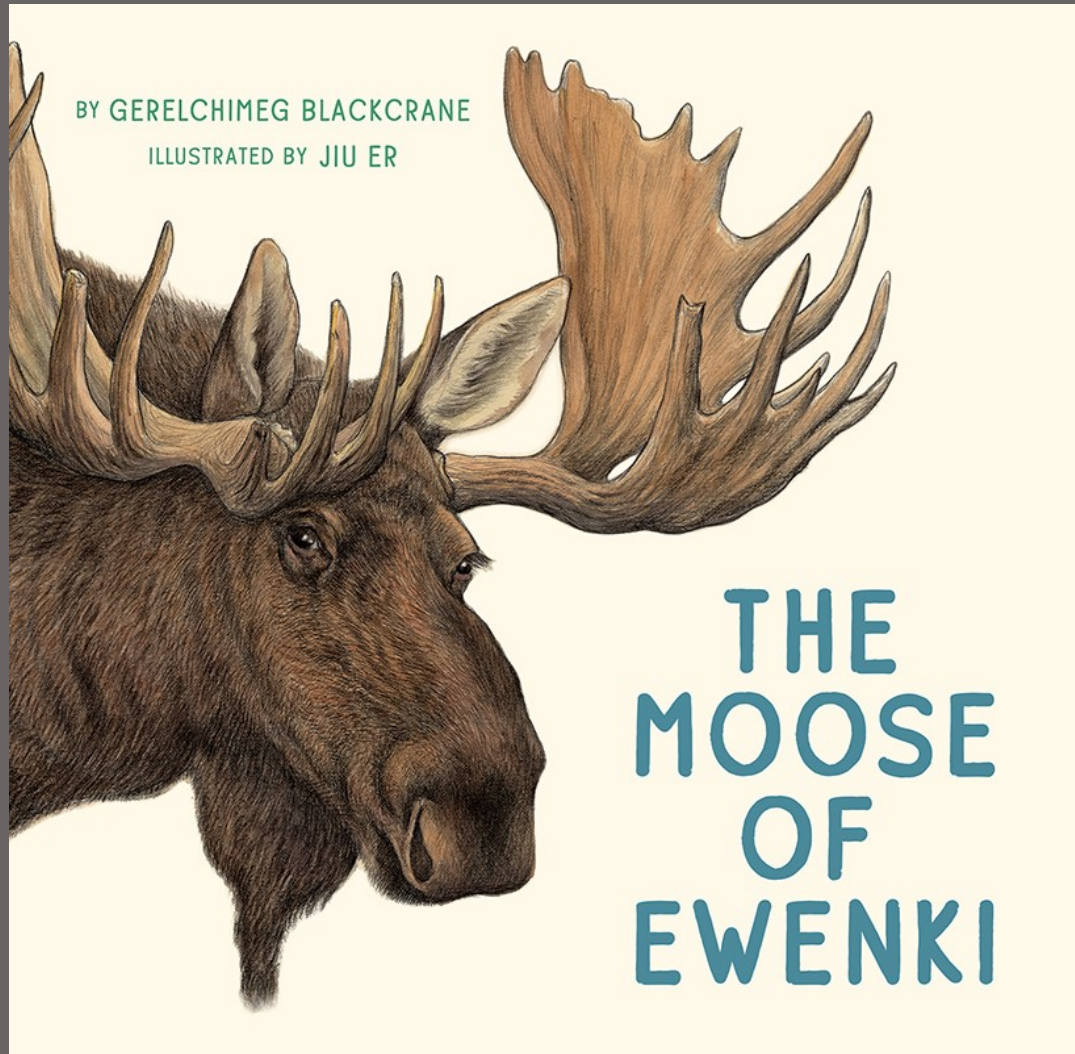


Lorena Alvarez  
*Hicotea:*  
*A Nightlights Story*

Illus. by  
Lorena Alvarez

**NoBrow**  
(UK)

Grades 3-5



Gerelchimeg

Blackcrane

*The Moose of*

*Ewenki*

Trans. by

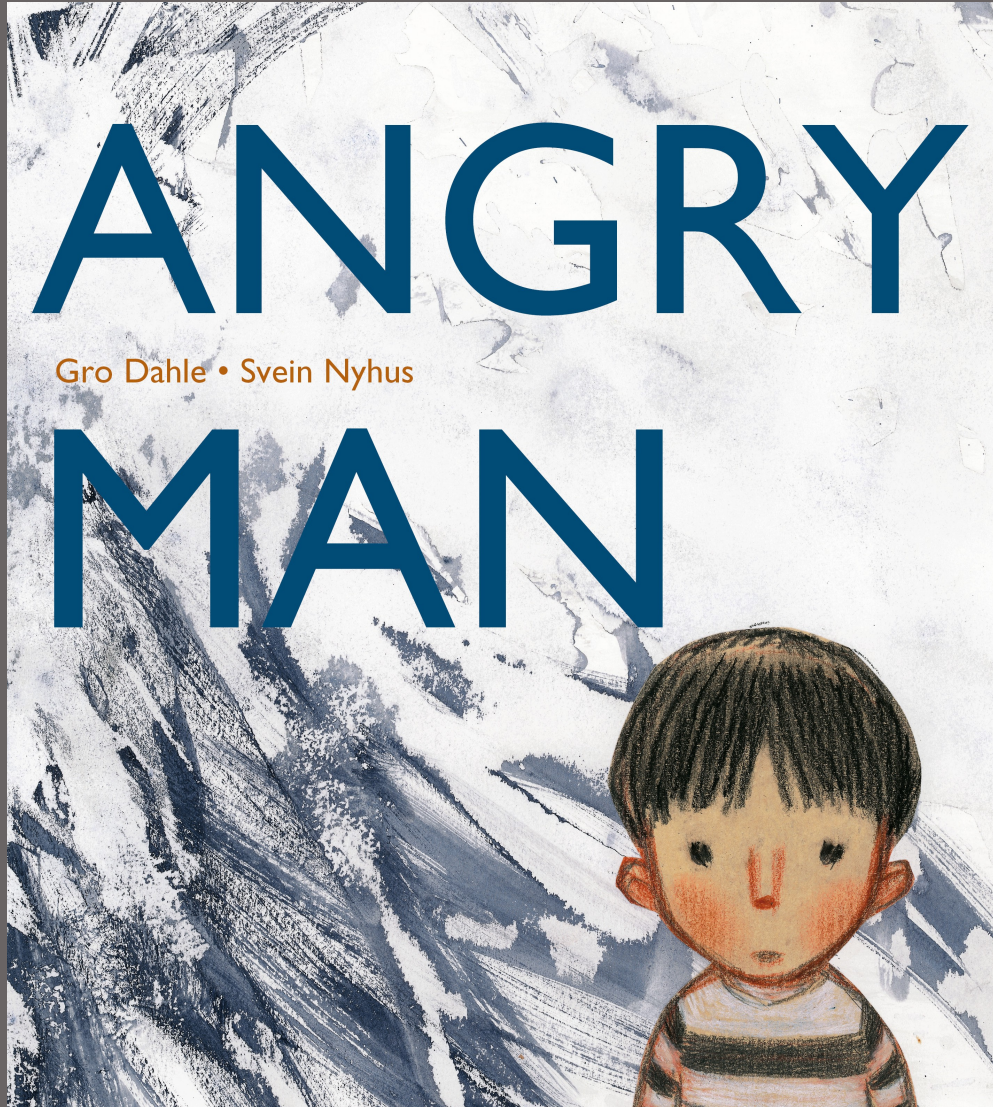
Helen Mixter

Illus. by Jiu Er

**Greystone Kids**

(China)

Grades 3-5



Gro Dahle

*Angryman*

Trans. by Tara Chace

Illus. by Svein Nyhus

**NorthSouth Books**

(Norway)

Grades 3-5



Hetxw'ms Gyetxw

(Brett D. Huson)

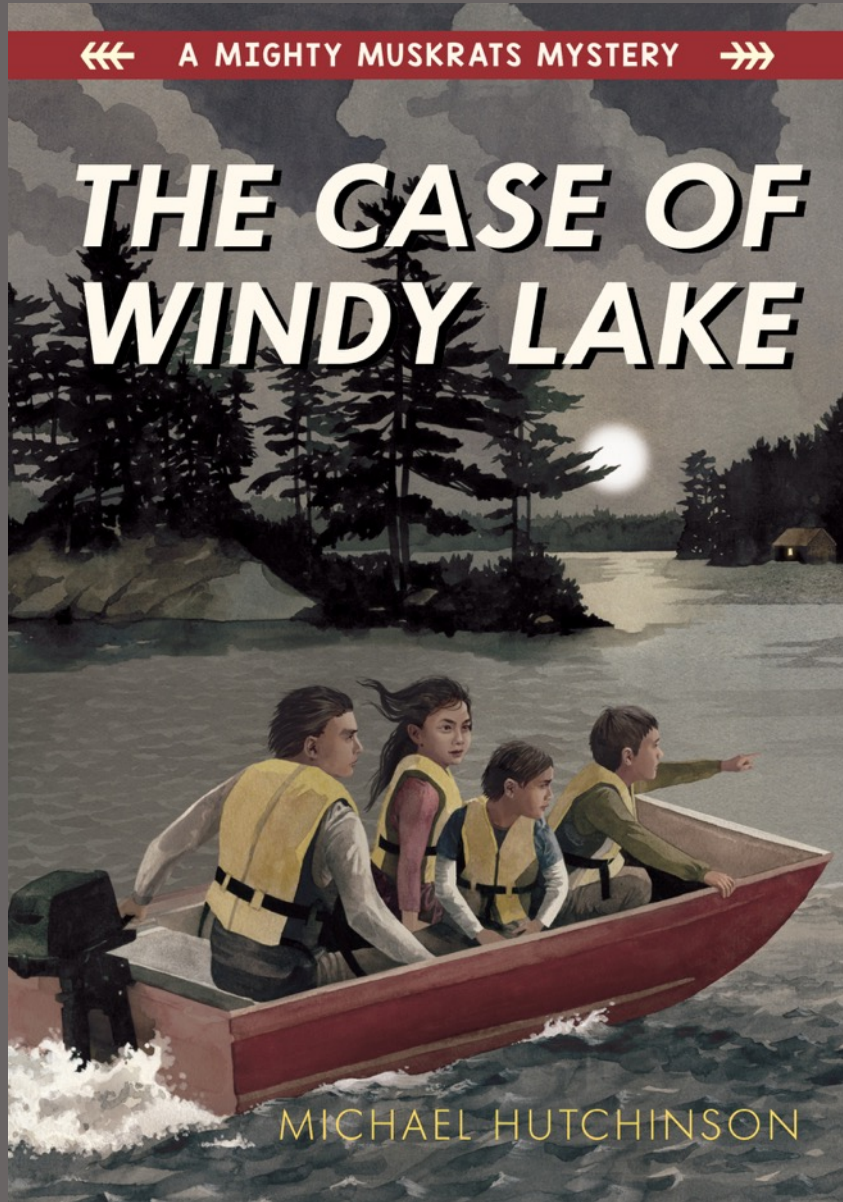
*The Grizzly Mother*

Illus. by Natasha Donovan

HighWater Press

(Canada)

Grades 3-5



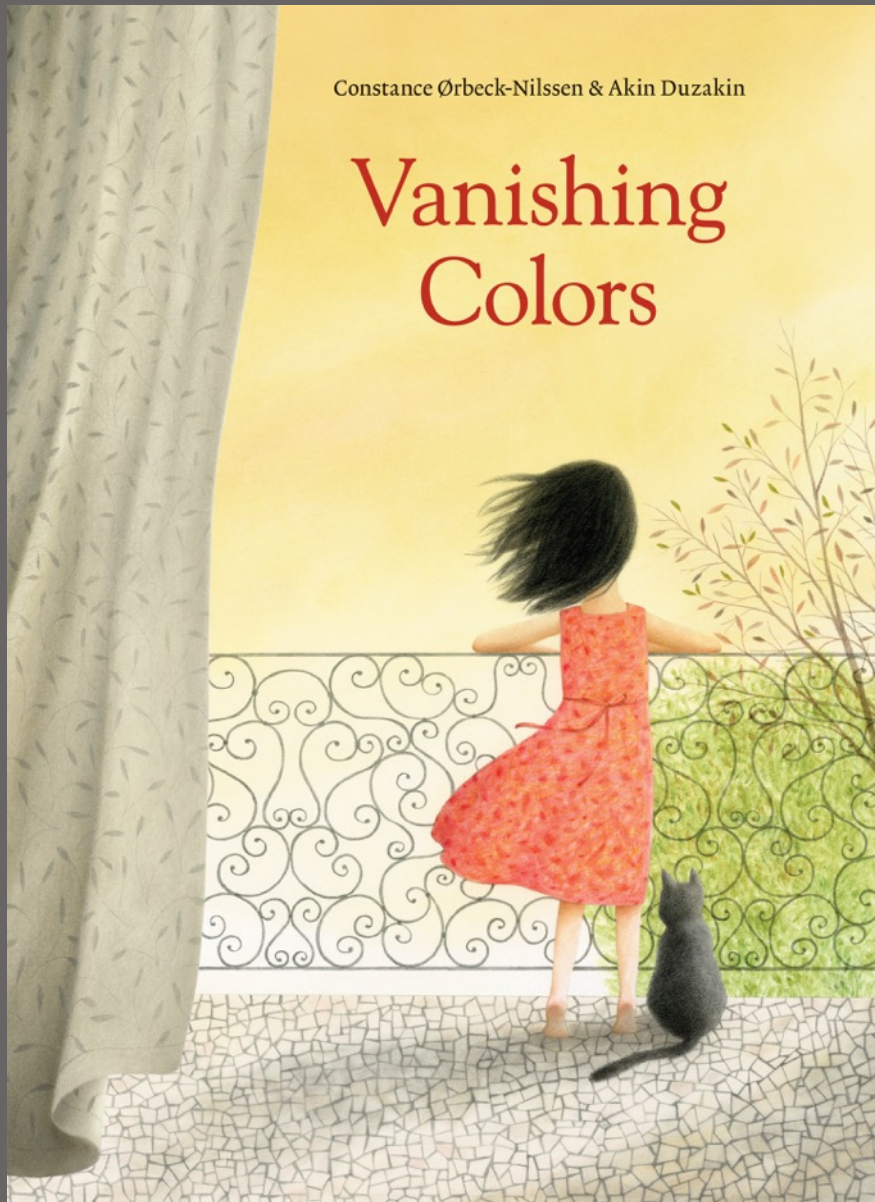
Michael Hutchinson

*The Case of Windy Lake*

Second Story Press

(Canada)

Grades 3-5



Constance

Ørbeck-Nilssen

*Vanishing Colors*

Trans. by Kari Dickson

Illus. by Akin Duzakin

**Eerdman Books for**

**Young Readers**

(Norway)

Grades 3-5



Katherine Rundell

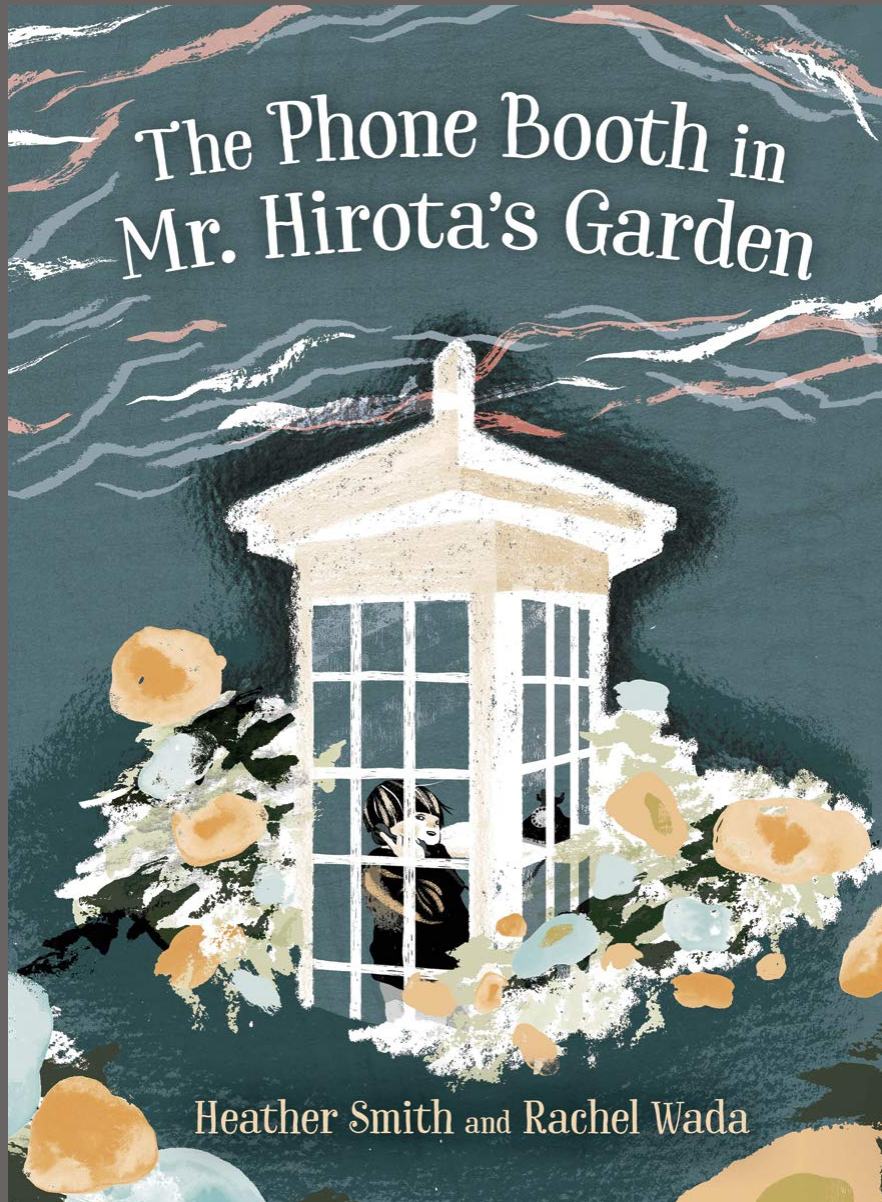
***The Good Thieves***

Simon & Shuster Books

for Young Readers

(UK/set in US)

Grades 3-5



Heather Smith

*The Phone Booth in  
Mr. Hirota's Garden*

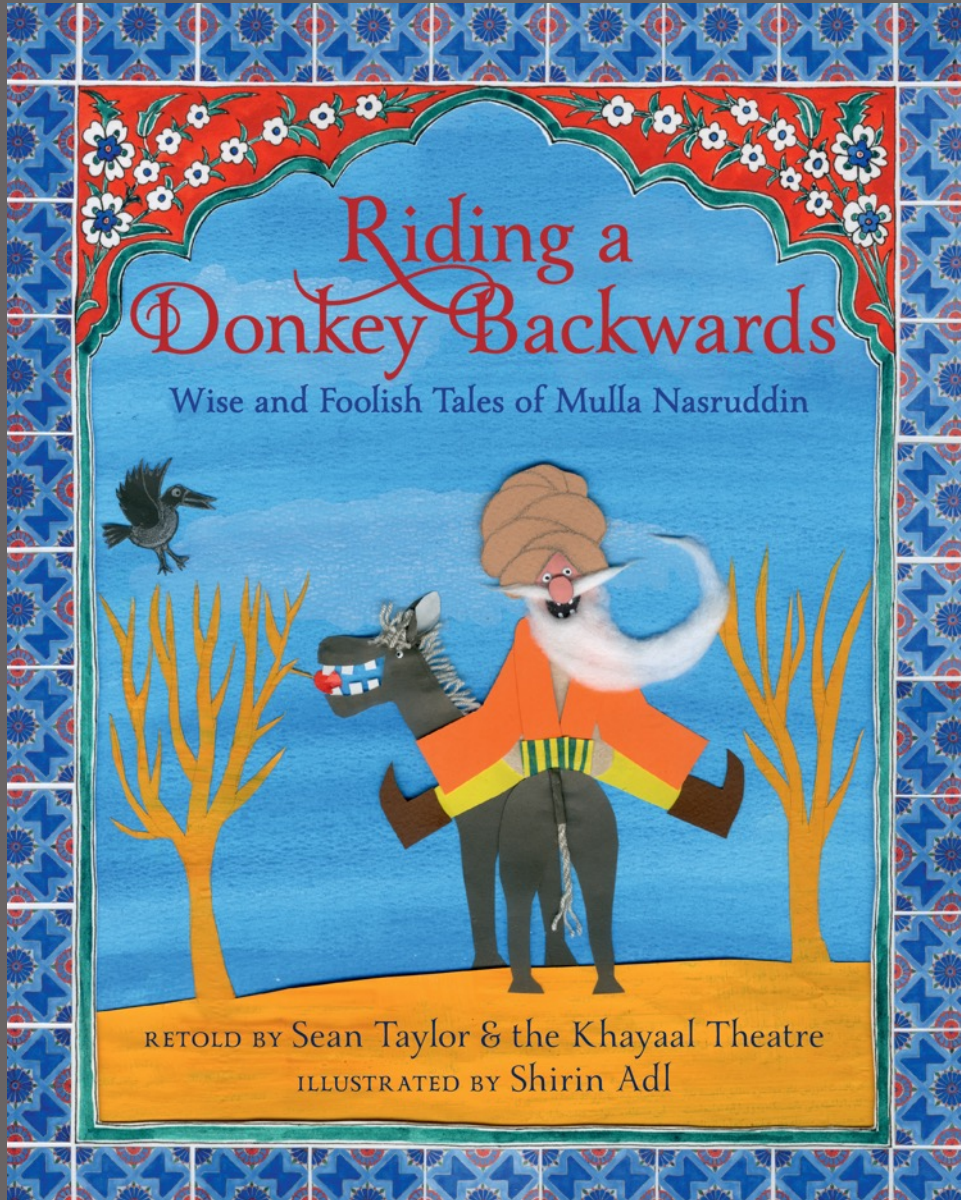
Illus. by Rachel Wada

**Orca Book Publishers**

(Canada/set in Japan)



Grades 3-5



Sean Taylor &  
the Khayaal Theatre

*Riding A Donkey*

*Backwards:*

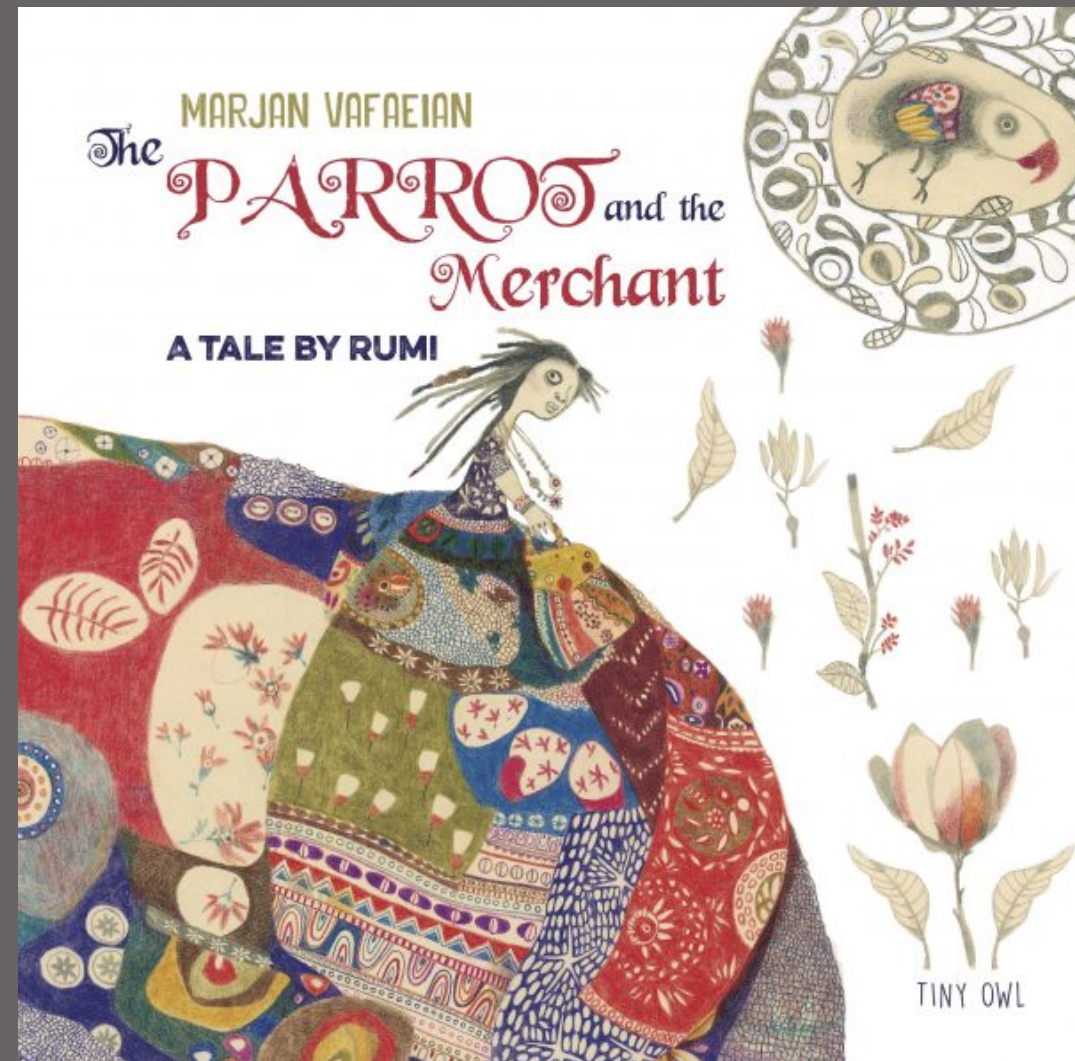
*Wise and Foolish Tales  
of Mulla Nasruddin*

Illus. by Shirin Adl

**Candlewick Press**

(UK)

Grades 3-5



Marjan Vafaeian

*The Parrot and  
the Merchant*

Trans. by Azita Rassi

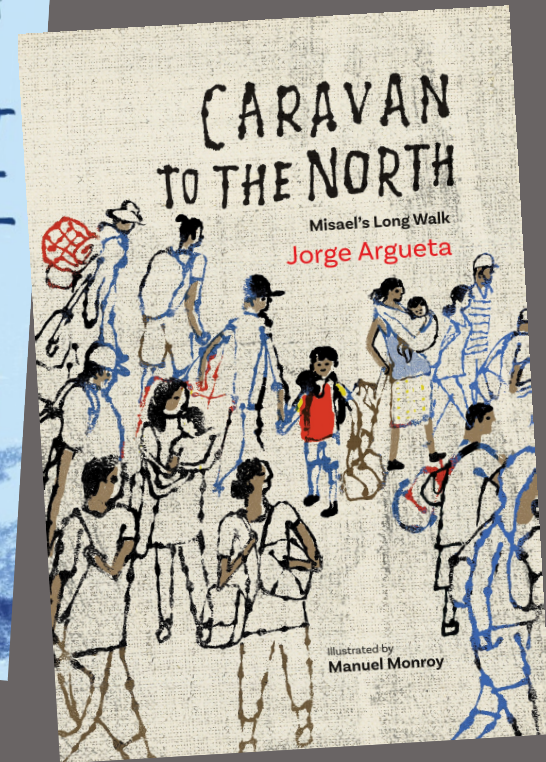
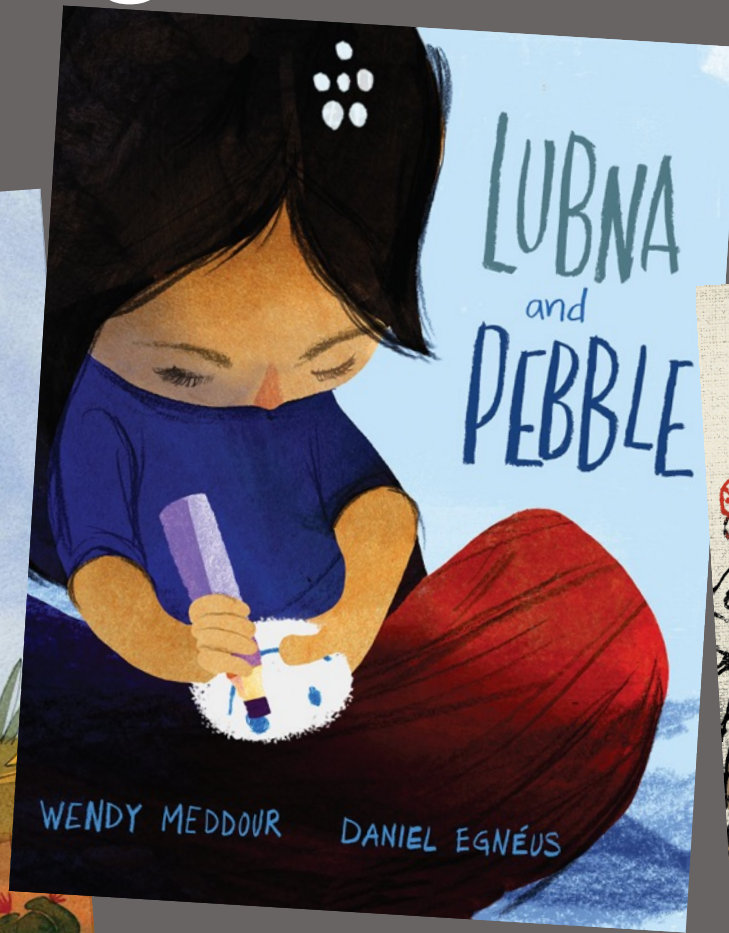
Illus. by

Marjan Vafaeian

**Tiny Owl Publishing**

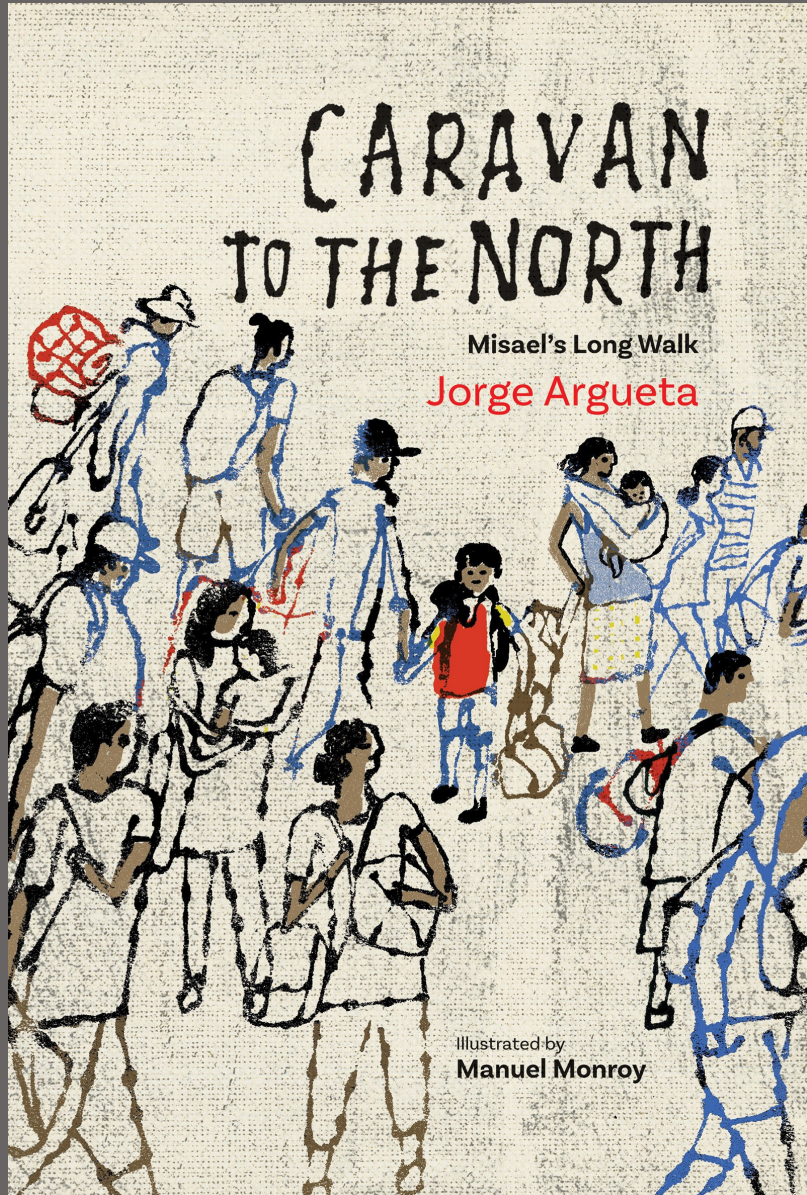
(Iran)

# Crossing Boundaries



Curated by 2020 OIB committee member Deanna Day

Grades 6-8



Jorge Argueta

*Caravan to the North:*

*Misael's Long Walk*

Trans. by Elizabeth Bell

Illus. by Manuel Monroy

**Groundwood Books**

(Canada/set in

Central America)

Grades 6-8



Candy Gourlay

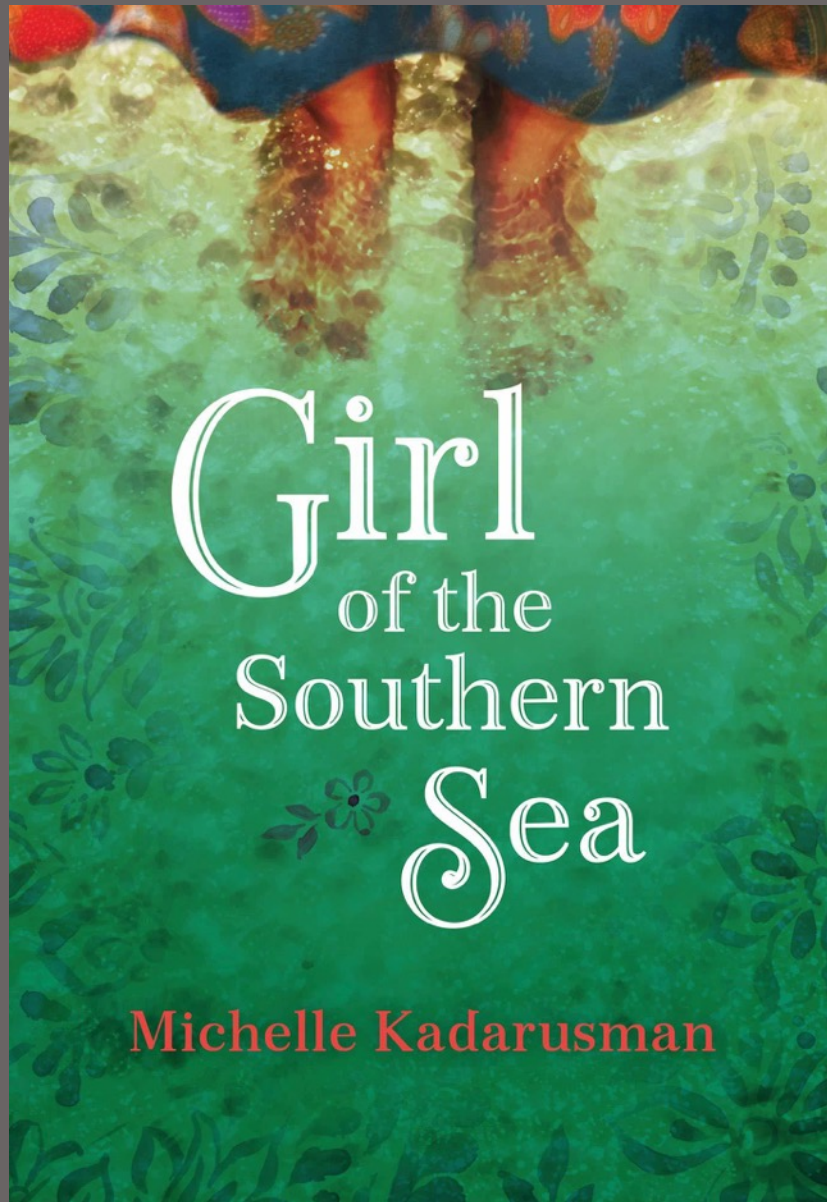
*Bone Talk*

Scholastic

(UK/set in the

Philippines)

Grades 6-8



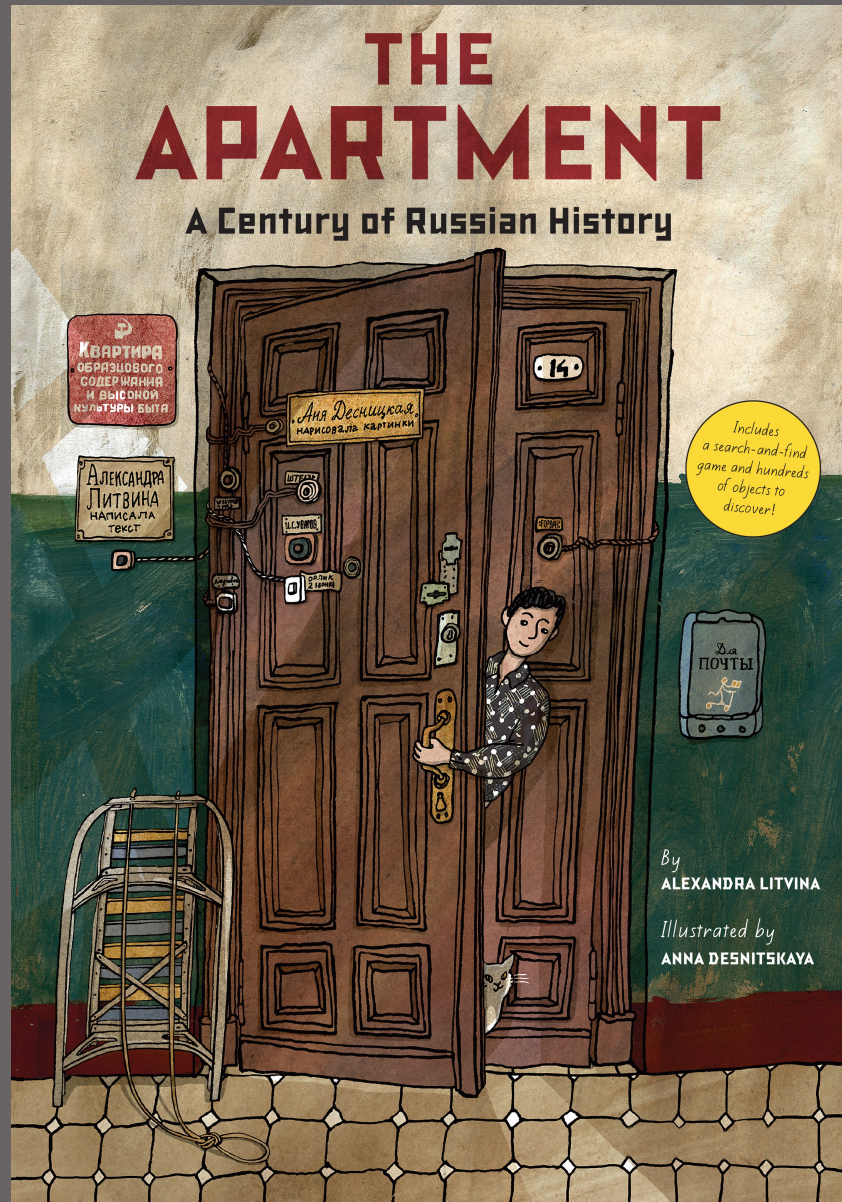
Michelle Kadarusman

*Girl of the Southern Sea*

Pajama Press

(Canada/set in Indonesia)

Grades 6-8



Alexandra Litvina

*The Apartment:*

*A Century of Russian History*

Trans. by Antonina W. Bouis

Illus. by Anna Desnitskaya

Abrams Books for

Young Readers

(Russia)

Grades 6-8



Roger Mello

*Charcoal Boys*

Trans. by

Daniel Egnéus

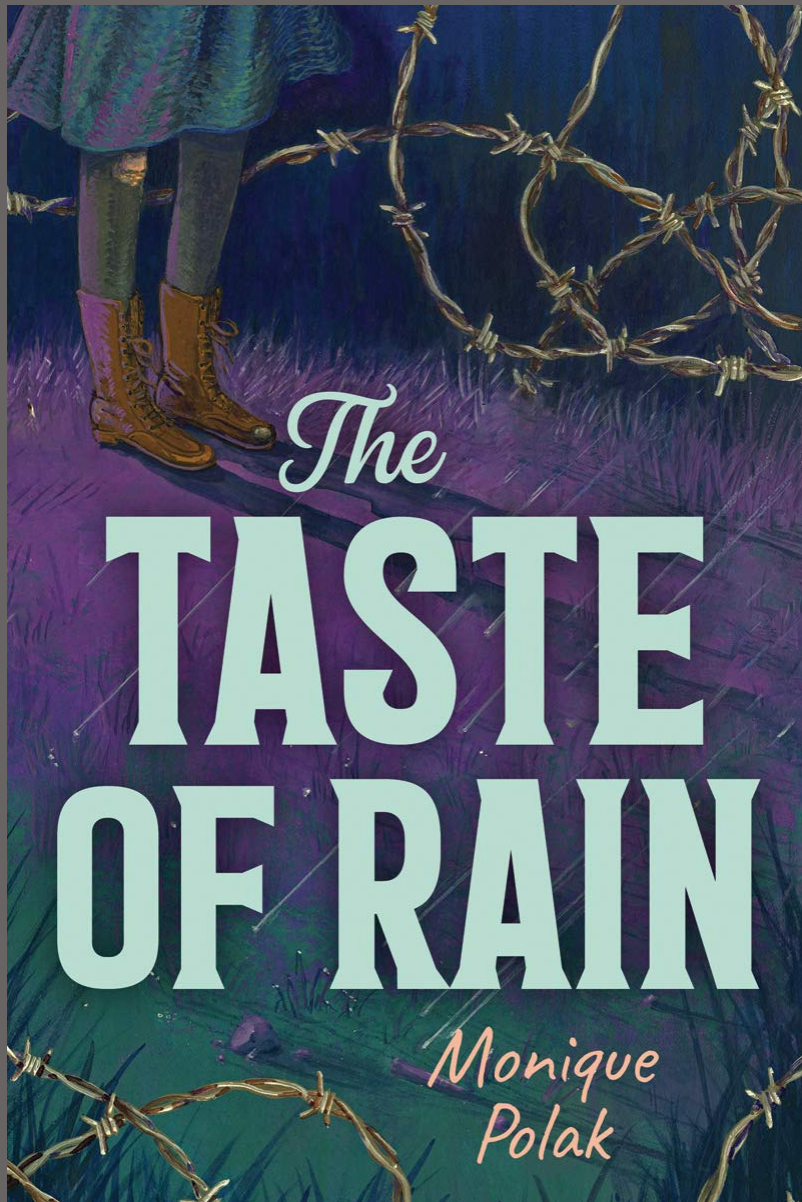
Illus. by Roger Mello

**Elsewhere Edition**

(Brazil)



Grades 6-8



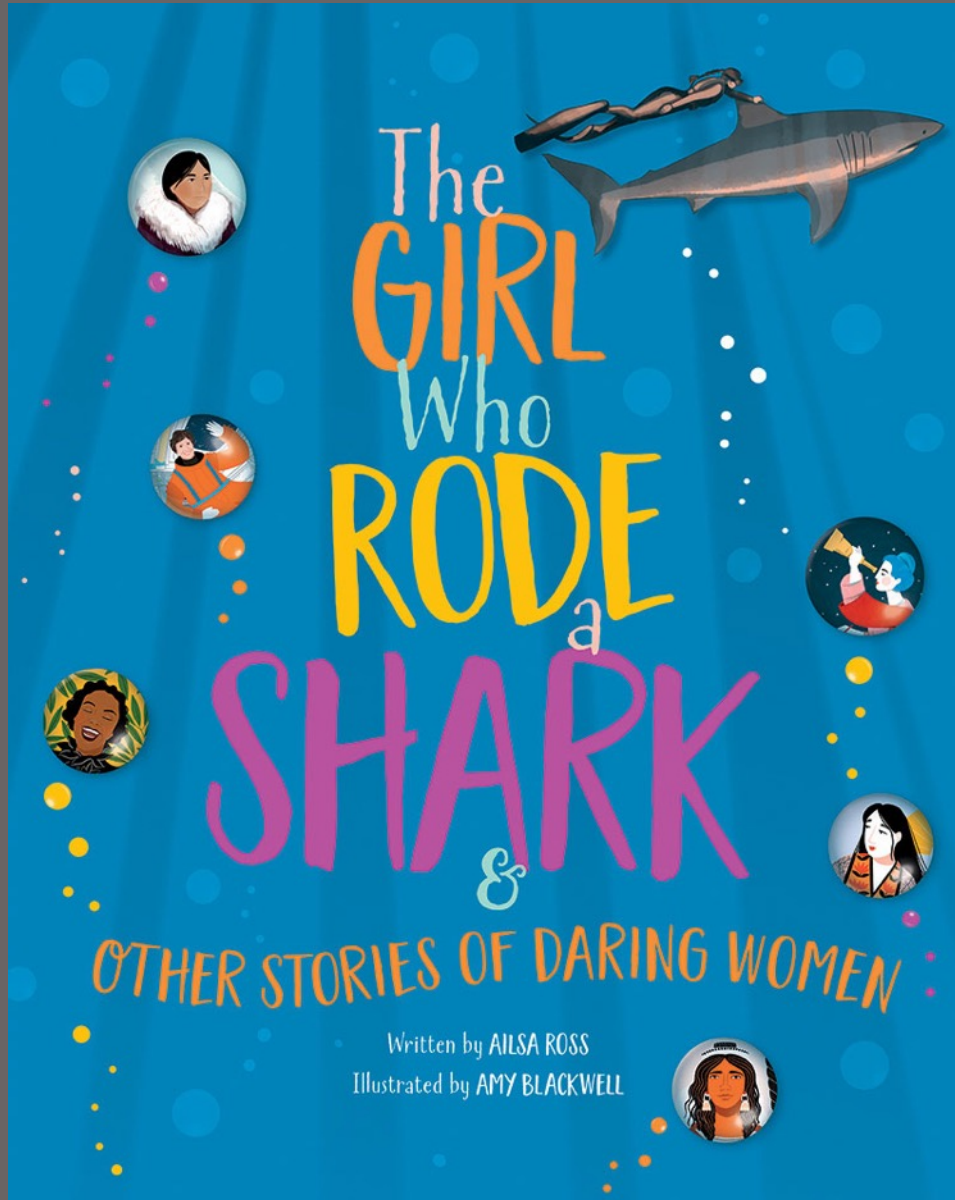
Monique Polak

*The Taste of Rain*

Orca Book Publishers

(Canada/set in China)

Grades 6-8



Ailsa Ross

*The Girl Who  
Rode a Shark:  
And Other Stories  
of Daring Women*

Illus. by

Amy Blackwell

Pajama Press

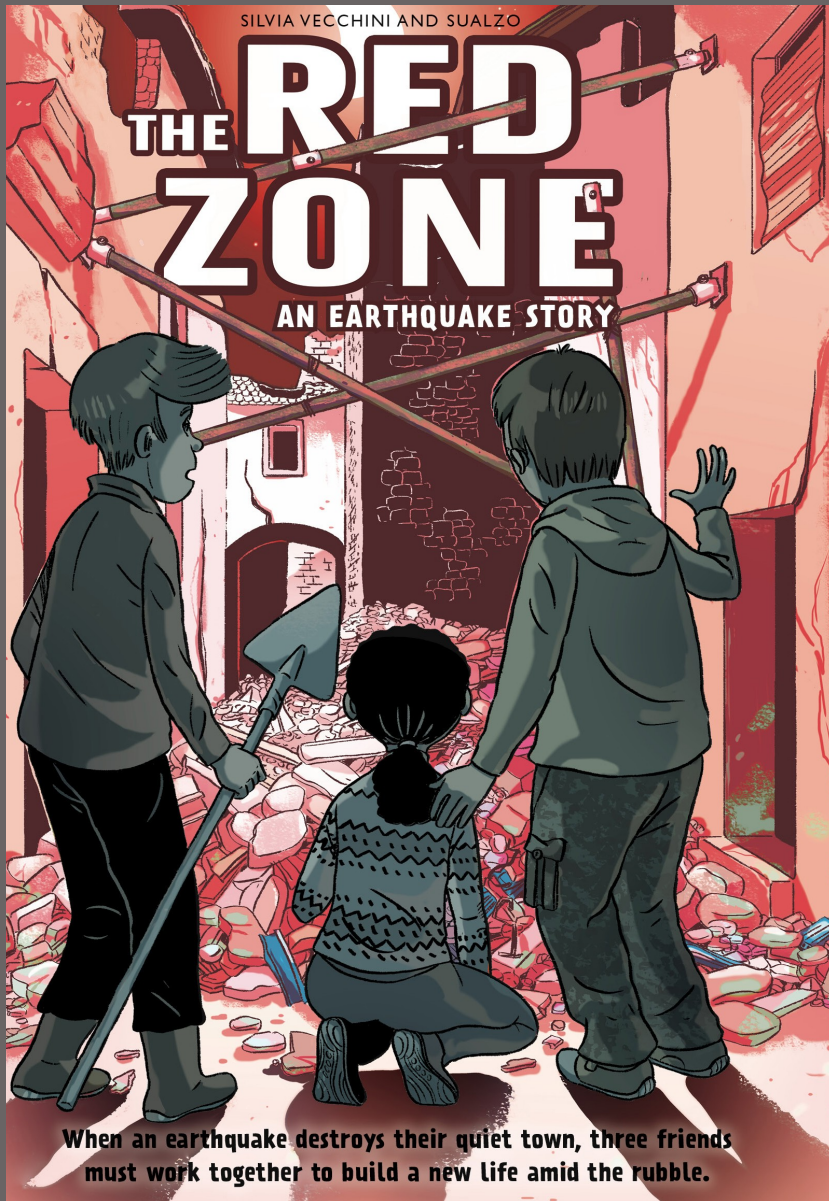
(Canada)

Grades 6-8



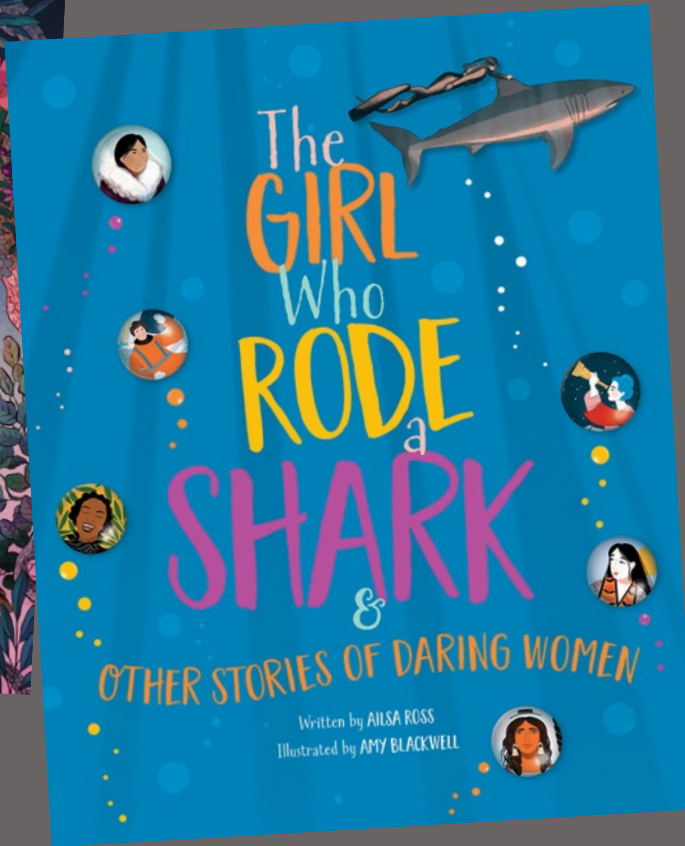
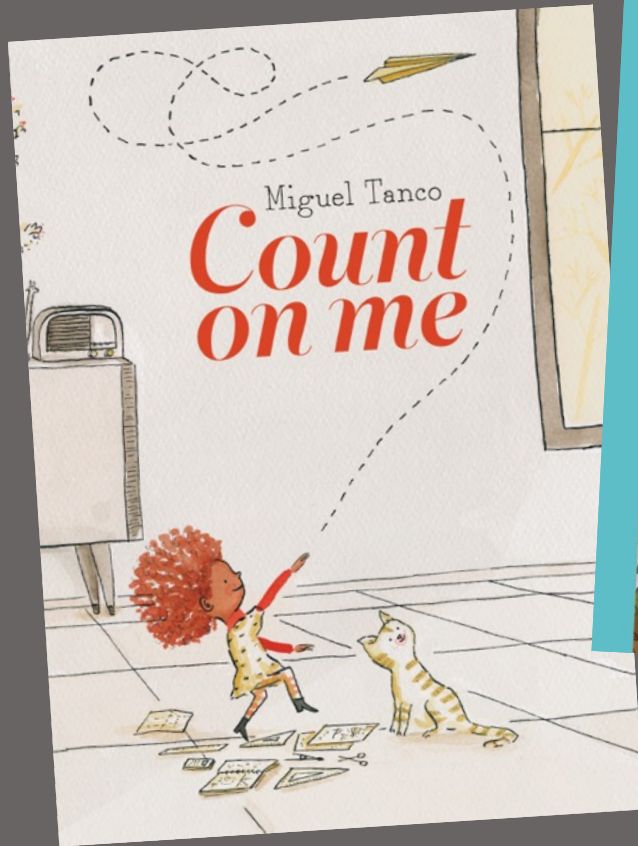
Lucy Strange  
*Our Castle by the Sea*  
Chicken House  
(UK)

Grades 6-8



Silvia Vecchini  
*The Red Zone:  
An Earthquake Story*  
Trans. by Anna Barton  
Illus. by Sualzo  
**Amulet Books**  
(Italy)

# Girls in STEM



Curated by 2020 OIB committee member **Mary Napoli**

Grades 9-12

FOREWORD BY KATHERENA VERMETTE

**KC Adams**

Perception: A Photo Series



KC Adams

*Perception:*

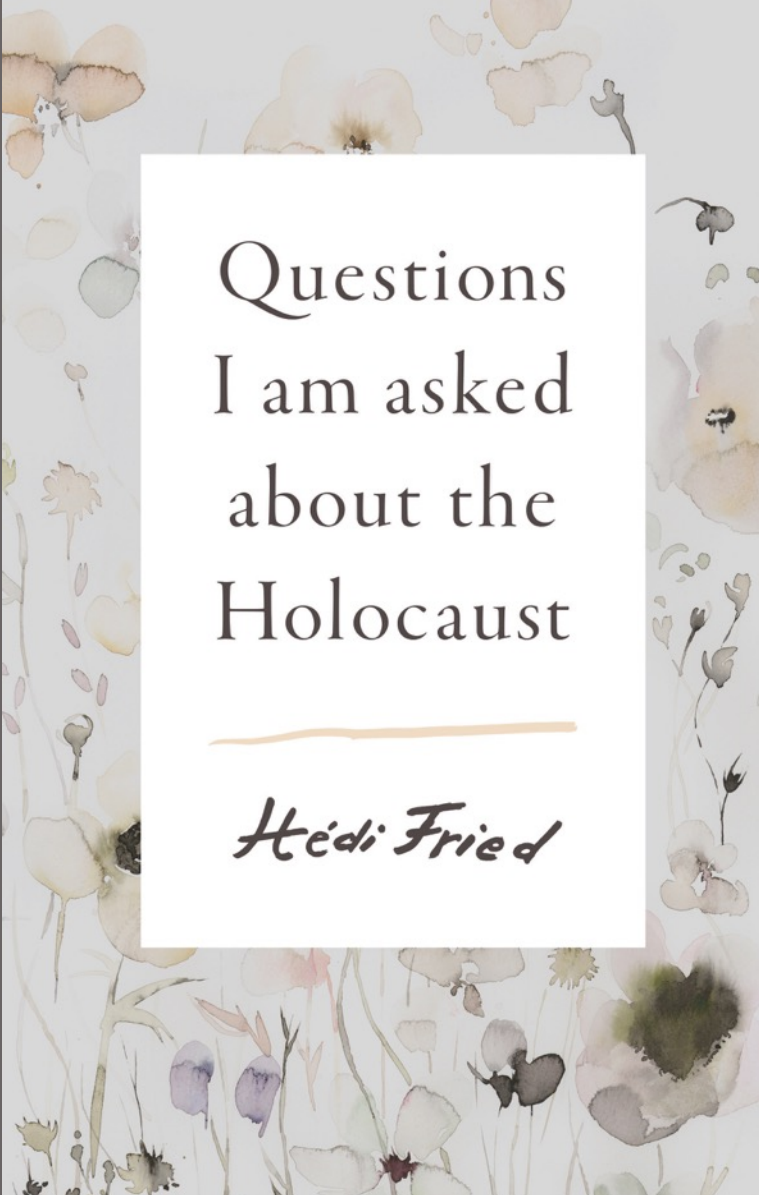
*A Photo Series*

Illus. by KC Adams

**HighWater Press**

(Canada)

Grades 9-12



Questions  
I am asked  
about the  
Holocaust

*Hédi Fried*

Hédi Fried

***Questions I Am Asked  
About the Holocaust***

Trans. by Alice E. Olsson

**Scribe Publications**

(Sweden)

Grades 9-12



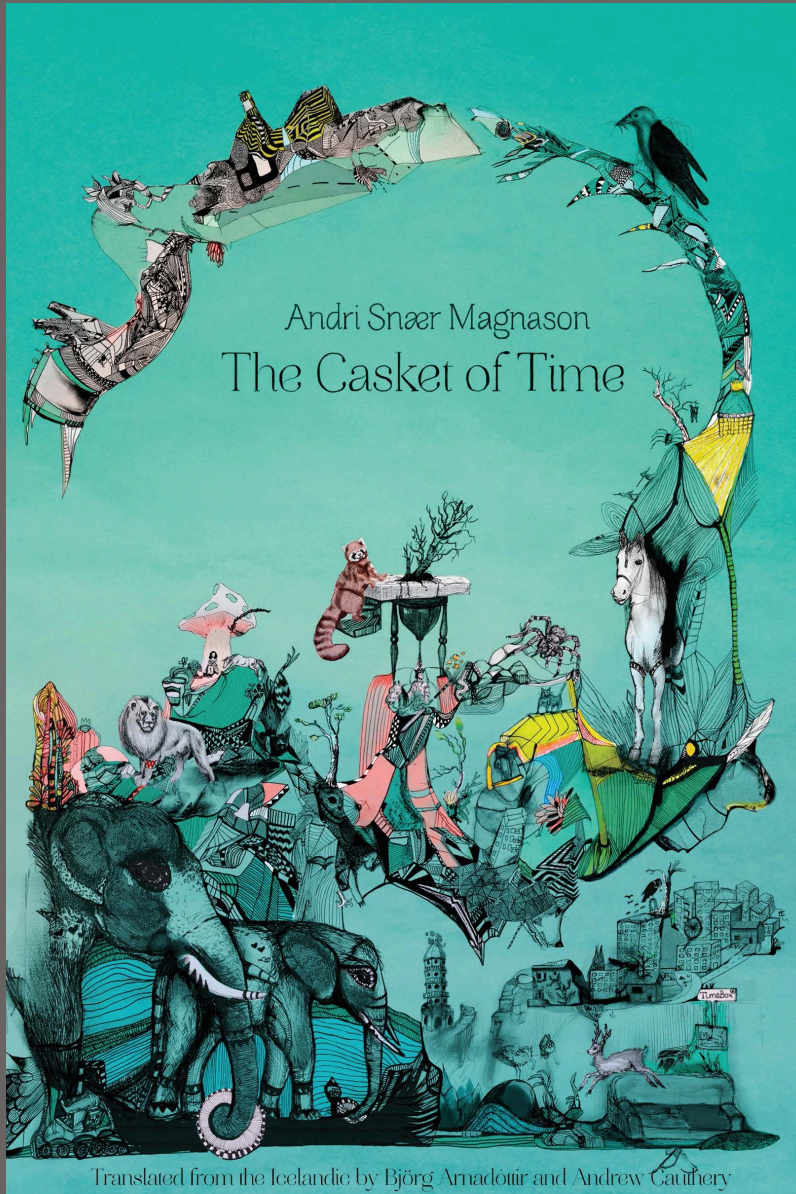
Ambelin Kwaymullina &  
Ezekiel Kwaymullina

*The Things She's Seen*

Alfred A. Knopf  
(Australia)

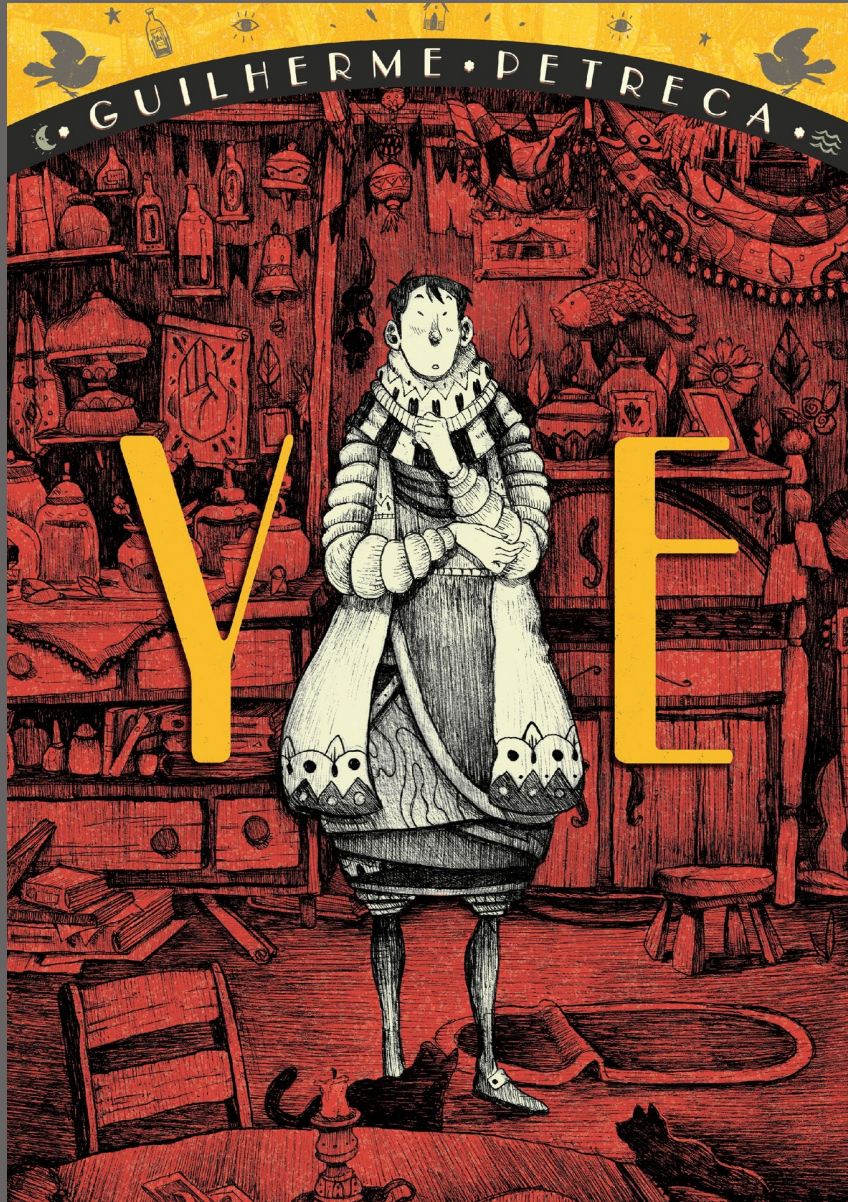


Grades 9-12



Andri Snær Magnason  
***The Casket of Time***  
Trans. by Björg Arnadóttir  
& Andrew Cauthery  
**Yonder**  
(Iceland)

Grades 9-12



Guilherme Petreca

*Ye*

Trans. by

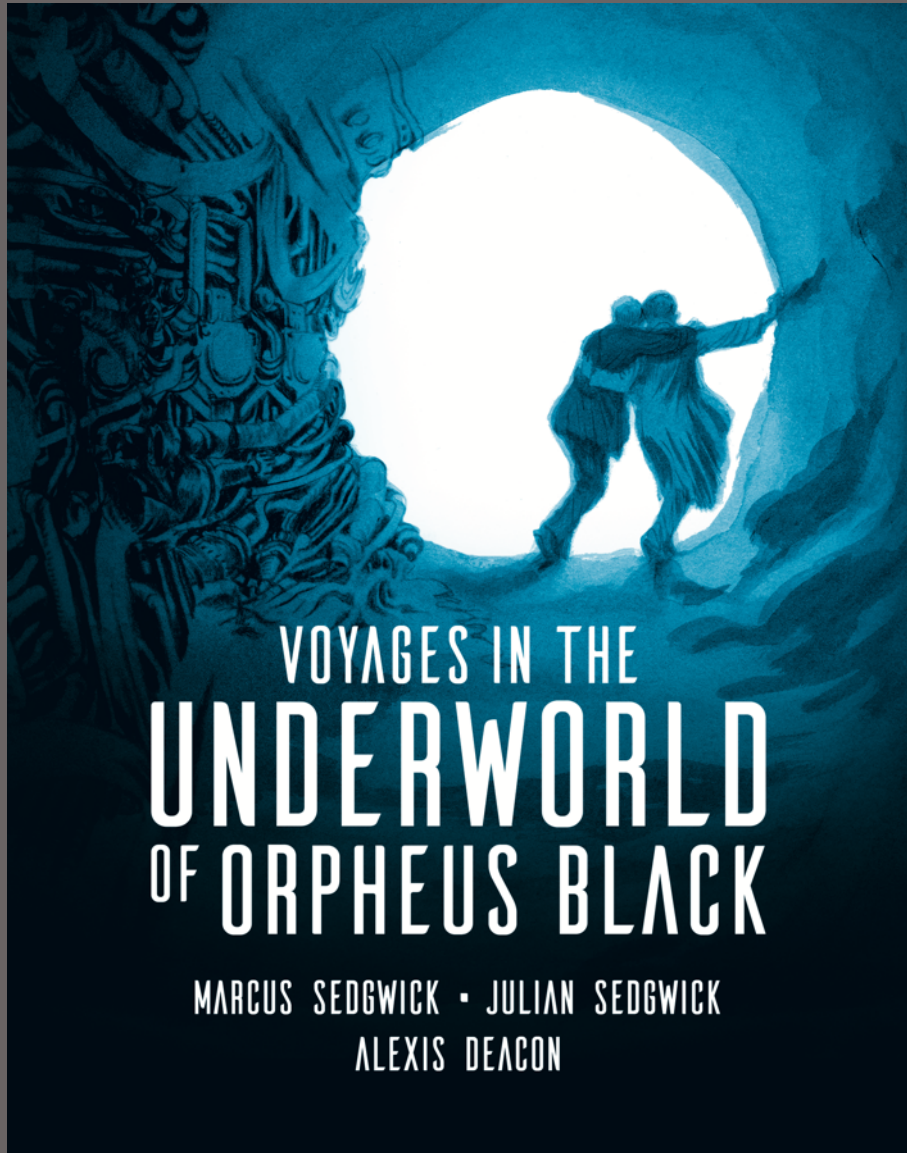
Andrea Rosenberg

Illus. by Guilherme Petreca

**Top Shelf Productions**

(Brazil)

Grades 9-12



Marcus Sedgwick  
& Julian Sedgwick

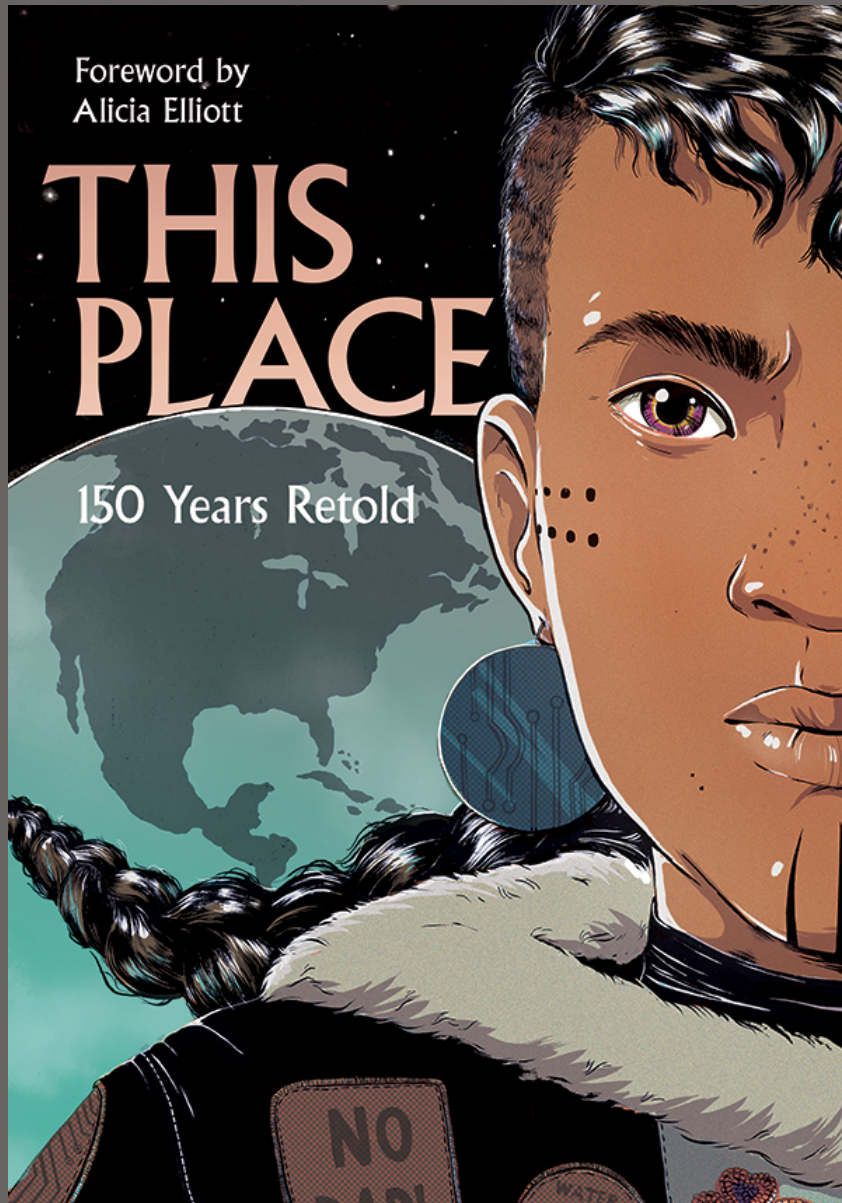
*Voyages in the  
Underworld of  
Orpheus Black*

Illus. by Alexis Deacon

**Walker Books**

(UK)

Grades 9-12



Various authors

*This Place:*

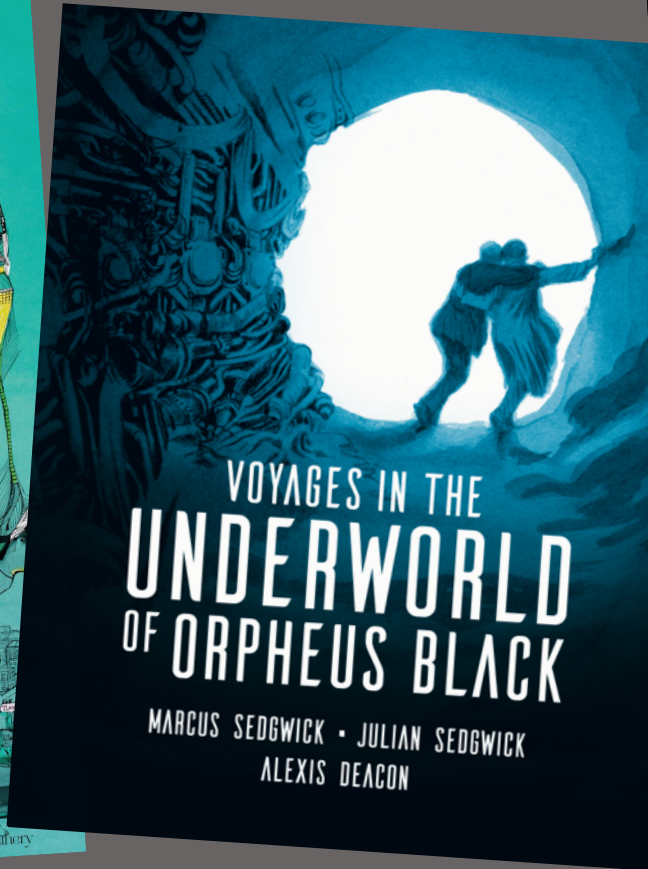
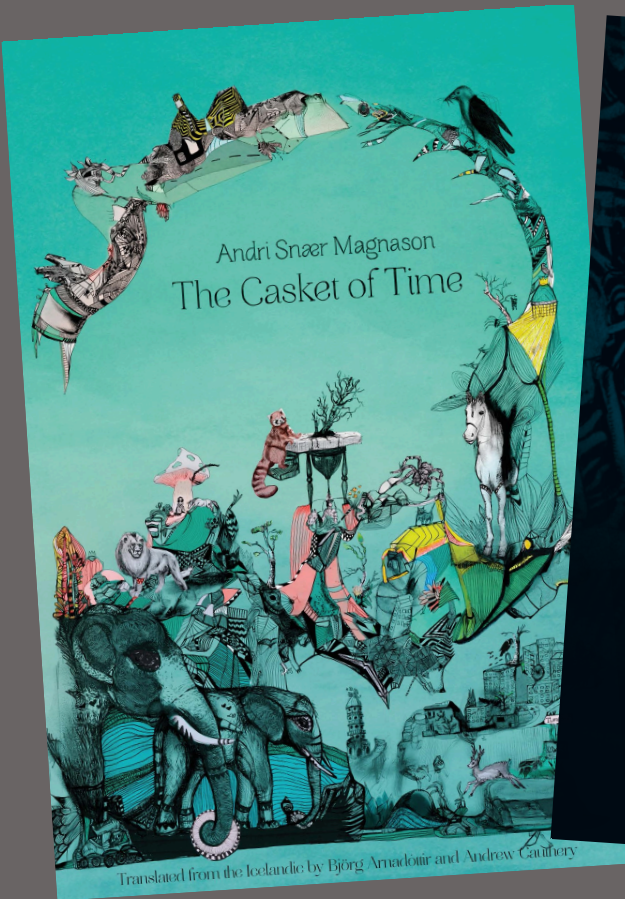
*150 Years Retold*

Illus. by various artists

**HighWater Press**

(Canada)

# Dystopia with a Twist



Curated by 2020 OIB committee member **Quentin Russell**