

Center for the Study of Multicultural Children's Literature

BEST MULTICULTURAL CHILDREN'S BOOKS OF 2023

Curated by Dr. Claudette S. McLinn, Lessa Kanani'opua Pelayo-Lozada, Dr. Naomi Caldwell, Jason Driver, Amber Hayes, Dr. Sujin Huggins, Susan Polos, and Lettycia Terrones

ALEBRIJES, by Donna Barba Higuera, 404 pages, published by Levine Querido, distributed by Chronicle Books LLC, ©2023, ISBN 978-1-64614-263-7, (Middle school/High school, dystopian)

ALL ABOARD THE SCHOOLTRAIN: A LITTLE STORY FROM THE GREAT MIGRATION, by Glenda Armand, illustrated by Keisha Morris, unpagged, published by Scholastic Press, ©2023, ISBN 978-1-338-76689-9, (Elementary school, fiction, picture book)

ALL RISE: THE STORY OF KETANJI BROWN JACKSON, by Carole Boston Weatherford, illustrated by Ashley Evans, unpagged, published by Crown Books for Young Readers, an imprint of Random House Children's Books, a division of Penguin Random House LLC, ©2023, ISBN 978-0-593-65016-5, (Elementary school, biography, picture book)

AMERICA REDUX: VISUAL STORIES FROM OUR DYNAMIC HISTORY, by Ariel Aberg-Riger, 294 pages, published by Balzer + Bray, an imprint of HarperCollinsPublishers, ©2023, ISBN 978-0-06-305753-1, (Middle school/High school, nonfiction)

AMERICAN STORY, AN, by Kwame Alexander, illustrated by Dare Coulter, unpagged, published by Little, Brown and Company, ©2023, ISBN 978-0-316-47312-5, (Elementary school, nonfiction, picture book)

ANCIENT NIGHT, written and illustrated by David Alvarez with David Bowles, unpagged, published by Levine Querido, distributed by Chronicle Books, LLC, ©2023, ISBN 978-1-64614-251-4, (Elementary school, folktale, picture book)

ANIANA DEL MAR JUMPS IN, by Jasminne Mendez, 374 pages, published by Dial Books for Young Readers, an imprint of Penguin Random House LLC, ©2023, ISBN 978-0-593-53181-5, (Middle school/High school, fiction, picture book)

AUTUMN PELTIER, WATER WARRIOR, by Carole Lindstrom, illustrated by Bridget George, unpagged, published by Roaring Book Press, ©2023, ISBN 978-1-25079-527-4, (Elementary school, biography/memoir, picture book)



BIG, written and illustrated by Vashti Harison, unpagged, published by Little Brown and Company, Hachette Book Group, ©2023, ISBN 978-0-, (Elementary school, fiction, picture book)

BOY WHO TRIED TO SHRINK HIS NAME, THE by Sandhya Parappukaran, illustrated by Michelle Pereira, unpagged, published by Abrams Books for Young Readers, an imprint ABRAMS, ©2023, ISBN 978-1-4197-6158-4, (Elementary school, fiction, picture book)

CAN WE PLEASE GIVE THE POLICE DEPARTMENT TO THE GRANDMOTHERS? by Junauda Petrus, illustrated by Kristen Uroda, unpagged, published by Dutton Children's Books, an imprint of Penguin Random House LLC, ©2023, ISBN 978-0-593-46233-1, (Elementary school, fiction, picture book)

CHEF EDNA: QUEEN OF SOUTHERN COOKING by Melvina Noel, illustrated by Cozbi A. Cabrera, unpagged, published by Cameron Kids, a division of ABRAMS, ©2023, ISBN 978-1-951836-39-9, (Elementary school, nonfiction, picture book)

CHINESE MENU: THE HISTORY, MYTHS, AND LEGENDS BEHIND YOUR FAVORITE FOODS, written and illustrated by Grace Lin, 288 pages, published by Little Brown, Hachette Group, ©2023, ISBN 978-0-316-48600-2, (Elementary school/Middle school, nonfiction, picture book)

COBRA'S SONG, THE, by Supriya Kelkar, 294 pages, published by Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers, ©2023, ISBN 978-1-6659-1188-7, (Upper elementary/Middle school, Fiction)

CORETTA'S JOURNEY: THE LIFE AND TIMES OF CORETTA SCOTT KING, by Alice Faye Duncan, illustrated by R. Gregory Christie, unpagged, published by Calkins Creek, an imprint of Astra Books for Young Readers, a division of Astra Publishing House, ©2023, ISBN 978-1-6626-8004-5, (Elementary school, biography, picture book)

DAY WITH NO WORDS, A, by Tiffany Hammond, illustrated by Kate Cosgrove, unpagged, published by Wheat Penny Press, an imprint of Row House Publishing, distributed by Simon & Schuster, ©2023, ISBN 978-1-7369497-9-5, (Elementary school, fiction, picture book)

EB & FLOW, by Kelly J. Baptist, 212 pages, published by Crown Books for Young Readers, an imprint of Random House Children's Books, a division of Penguin Random House LLC, ©2023, ISBN 978—593-42913-6, (Upper elementary school/Middle school, fiction)



ELLEN TAKES FLIGHT: THE LIFE OF ASTRONAUT ELLEN OCHOA, by Doreen Rappaport, illustrated by Oliver Dominguez, unpagged, published by Little Brown and Company, ©2023, ISBN 978-0-7595-5494-8, (Elementary school, biography, picture book)

FINALLY SEEN, by Kelly Yang, 298 pages, published by Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers, an imprint of Simon & Schuster Children's Publishing Division, ©2023, ISBN 978-1-5344-8833-5, (Upper elementary school/Middle school, fiction)

FIRST TIME FOR EVERYTHING, A, written and illustrated by Dan Santat, 308 pages, published by First Second, an imprint of Roaring Book Press, a division of Holtzbrinck Publishing Holdings Limited Partnership., ©2023, ISBN 978-1-250-85104-8, (Elementary school/Middle school, memoir, graphic novel)

FOR LAMB, by Lesa Cline-Ransome, 297 pages, published by Holiday House, ©2023, ISBN 978-0-8234-50152, (Middle school/High school, fiction)

GAME OF FREEDOM, written and illustrated by Duncan Tonatiuh, unpagged, published by Abrams Books for Young Readers, an imprint of ABRAMS, ©2023, ISBN 978-1-4197-6458-5, (Elementary school, nonfiction, picture book)

GHOSTS, TOAST AND OTHER HAZARDS, by Susan Tan, 227 pages, published by Roaring Book Press, division of Holtzbrinck Publishing Holdings Limited Partnership, ©2023, ISBN 978-1-250-79700-1, (Upper elementary/Middle school, fiction)

GIRL WHO HEARD THE MUSIC, THE: HOW ONE PIANIST AND 85,000 BOTTLES AND CANS BROUGHT NEW HOPE TO AN ISLAND, by Marni Fogelson and Mahani Teave, illustrated by Marta Alvarez Miguéns, unpagged, published by Sourcebooks eXplore, an imprint of Sourcebooks for Kids, ©2023, ISBN 978-1-7282-6231-4, (Elementary school, biography, picture book)

GRANDMA'S TIPI: A PRESENT- DAY LAKOTA STORY, written and illustrated by S.D. Nelson, unpagged, published by Abrams Books for Young Readers, an imprint of ABRAMS, ©2023, ISBN 978-1-4197-3192-1, (Elementary school, fiction, picture book)

GREEN PIANO: HOW LITTLE ME FOUND MUSIC, by Roberta Flack with Tonya Bolden, illustrated by Hayden Goodman, unpagged, published by Anne Schwartz Books, an imprint of Random House Children's Books, a division of Penguin Random House LLC, ©2023, ISBN 978-0-593-47987-2, (Elementary school, biography, picture book)

HARLEM AT FOUR, by Dr. Michael Datcher, illustrated by Frank Morrison, unpagged, published by Random House Studio, an imprint of Random House Children's Books, a division of Penguin Random House LLC, ©2023, ISBN 978-0-593-42933-4, (Elementary school, fiction, picture book)



HOLDING HER OWN: THE EXCEPTIONAL LIFE OF JACKIE ORMES, by Traci N. Todd, illustrated by Shannon Wright, unpagged, published by Orchard Books, an imprint of Scholastic Inc., ©2023, ISBN 978-1-338-30590-6, (Elementary school, biography, picture book)

HOW DO YOU SPELL UNFAIR? MACNOLIA COX AND THE NATIONAL SPELLING BEE, by Carole Boston Weatherford, illustrated by Frank Morrison, unpagged, published by Candlewick Press, ©2023, ISBN 978-1-5362-1554-0, (Elementary school, biography, picture book)

I'M FROM, by Gary R. Gray, Jr., illustrated by Oge Mora, unpagged, published by Balzer + Bray, an imprint of HarperCollinsPublishers, ©2023, ISBN 978-0-06-308996-9, (Elementary school, fiction, picture book)

IMPOSTER SYNDROME AND OTHER CONFESSIONS OF ALEJANDRA KIM, by Patricia Park, 291 pages, published by Crown Books for Young Readers, an imprint of Random House Children's Books, a division of Penguin Random House LLC, ©2023, ISBN 978-0-593-56337-3, (High school, fiction)

IN EVERY LIFE, written and illustrated by Marla Frazee, unpagged, published by Beach Lane Books, an imprint of Simon & Schuster Childrens Publishing Division, ©2023, ISBN 978-1-6659-1248-8, (Elementary school, fiction, picture book)

JOVITA WORE PANTS: THE STORY OF A MEXICAN FREEDOM FIGHTER, by Aida Salazar, illustrated by Molly Mendoza, unpagged, published by Scholastic Press, an imprint of Scholastic Inc., ©2023, ISBN 978-1-338-28341-9, (Elementary school, biography, picture book)

JUST JERRY: HOW DRAWING SHAPED MY LIFE, written and illustrated by Jerry Pinkney, 141 pages, published by Little Brown and Company, a division of Hachette Book Group Inc., ©2023, ISBN 978-0-316-38385-1, (Upper Elementary school/Middle school, memoir)

JUST A HAT, by S. Khubiar, 245 pages, published by Blackstone Publishing, ©2023, ISBN 978-1-8200864973, (Middle school/High school, historical fiction)

KINDEST RED, THE: A STORY OF HIJAB AND FRIENDSHIP, by Ibtihaj Muhammad, illustrated by Hatem Aly, unpagged, published by Little, Brown and Company, 2023, ISBN: 978-0-7595-5570-9, (Preschool/elementary school, fiction, picture book)

LEI AND THE FIRE GODDESS, by Malia Maunakea, 298 pages, published by Penguin Workshop, an imprint of Penguin Random House LLC, ©2023, ISBN 978-0-593-52203-5 (Upper elementary/middle school, fiction)



LETTER FOR BOB, A, by Kim Rogers, illustrated by Jonathan Nelson, unpagged, published by Heartdrum, an imprint of HarperCollinsPublishers, ©2023, ISBN 978-0-06-304455-5, (Elementary school, fiction, picture book)

LOVE IS LOUD: HOW DIANE NASH LED THE CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT, by Sandra Neil Wallace, illustrated by Bryan Collier, unpagged, published by Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers, an imprint of Simon & Schuster Children's Publishing Division, ©2023, ISBN 978-1-5344-5103-2 (Elementary school, nonfiction/biography, picture book)

MAKING OF YOLANDA LA BRUJA, THE, by Lorraine Avila, 374 pages, published by Levine Querido, distributed by Chronicle Books, LLC, ©2023, ISBN 978-1-64614-243-9, (Middle school/High school, fiction)

MANY ASSASSINATIONS OF SAMIR, THE SELLER OF DREAMS, THE, by Daniel Nayeri, illustrated by Daniel Miyares, 216 pages, published by Levine Querido, distributed by Chronicle Books, LLC, ©2023, ISBN 978-1-64614-303-0, (Middle school, fiction)

MARTINA HAS TOO MANY TÍAS, by Emma Otheguy, illustrated by Sara Palacios, unpagged, published by Antheneum Books for Young Readers, an imprint of Simon & Schuster Publishing Division, ©2023, ISBN 978-1-5344-4536-9 (Elementary school, fiction, picture book)

MASCOT, by Charles Waters and Traci Sorell, 248 pages, published by Charlesbridge, ©2023, ISBN 978-1-62354-380-8, (Middle school/High school, fiction)

MEXIKID: A GRAPHIC MEMOIR, written and illustrated by Pedro Martín, 309 pages, published by Dial Books for Young Readers, an imprint of Penguin Random House LLC, ©2023, ISBN 978-0-593-46229-4, (Elementary school/Middle school, memoir, graphic novel)

MNOOMIN MAAN'GOWING/THE GIFT OF MNOOMIN, by Brittany Luby, translated by Mary Ann Corbiere, illustrated by Joshua Mangeshig Pawis- Steckley, unpagged, published by Groundwood Books, ©2023, ISBN 978-1-77306-846-6, (Elementary school, fiction, picture book)

MORE THAN A DREAM: THE RADICAL MARCH ON WASHINGTON FOR JOBS AND FREEDOM, by Yohuru Williams and Michael G. Long, 237 pages, published by Farrar Straus Giroux Books for Young Readers, an imprint of Macmillan Publishing Group, LLC, ©2023, ISBN 978-0-374-39174-4, (Middle school, nonfiction,)



MY GRANDFATHER'S SONG, written and illustrated by Phùng Nguyễn Quang and Huỳnh Kim Liên, unpagged, published by Make Me A World, an imprint of Random House Children's Books, a division of Penguin Random House LLC, ©2023, ISBN 978-0-593-48861-4, (Elementary school, fiction, picture book)

MY POWERFUL HAIR, by Carole Lindstrom, illustrated by Steph Littlebird, unpagged, published by Abrams Books for Young Readers, an imprint of ABRAMS, ©2023, ISBN 978-1-4197-5943-7, (Elementary school, fiction, picture book)

NEARER MY FREEDOM: THE INTERESTING LIFE OF OLAUDAH ESQUIANO BY HIMSELF, by Monica Edinger and Lesley Younge, 216 pages, published by Zest Books, an imprint of Lerner Publishing Group, Inc., ©2023, ISBN 978-1-7284-5098-8, (Middle school/High school, biography)

NIC BLAKE AND THE REMARKABLES: THE MANIFESTOR PROPHECY, by Angie Thomas, 351 pages, published by Balzer + Bray, an imprint of HarperCollinsPublishers, ©2023, ISBN 978-0-06-322513-8, (Upper elementary/Middle school, fiction)

NINE (9) KILOMETERS, by Claudio Aguilera, translated by Lawrence Schimel, illustrated by Gabriela Lyon, unpagged, published by Eerdmans Books for Young Readers, an imprint of Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, ©2023, ISBN 978-0-8028-5600-5, (Elementary school, fiction, picture book)

ON THE TIP OF A WAVE: HOW AI WEIWEI'S ART IS CHANGING THE TIDE, by Joanna Ho, illustrated by Cátia Chien, unpagged, published by Orchard Books, an imprint of Scholastic Inc., ©2023, ISBN 978-1-338-71594-1, (Elementary school, biography, picture book)

ONCE IN A BLUE MOON, by Sharon G. Flake, 323 pages, published by Alfred A. Knopf, an imprint of Random House Children's Books, a division of Penguin Random House LLC, ©2023, ISBN 978-0-593-48098-4, (Upper elementary/Middle school, fiction)

PARACHUTE KIDS, written and illustrated by Betty C. Tang, 282 paged, published by Graphix, an imprint of Scholastic Inc., ©2023, ISBN 978-1-338-83269-3, (Upper elementary/Middle School, fiction, graphic novel)

PASS THE BABY, by Susanna Reich, illustrated by Raúl Colón, unpagged, published by Neal Porter Books, an imprint of Holiday House, ©2023, ISBN 978-0-8234-5085-5, (Elementary school, fiction, picture book)

REMEMBER, by Joy Harjo, illustrated by Michaela Goade, unpagged, published by Random House Studio, an imprint of Random House Children's Books, a division of Penguin Random House LLC, ©2023, ISBN 978-0-593-48484-5, (Elementary school, poetry, picture book)



REMEMBER US, by Jacqueline Woodson, 180 pages, published by Nancy Paulsen Books, an imprint of Penguin Random House LLC, ©2023, ISBN 978-0-399-54546-7, (Upper elementary school/Middle school, fiction)

RIVKA'S PRESENTS, by Laurie Wallmark, illustrated by Adelina Lirius, unpagged, published by Random House Studio, an imprint of Random House Children's Books, a division of Penguin Random House LLC, ©2023, ISBN 978-0-593-48207-0, (Elementary school, fiction, picture book)

ROCK, ROSETTA, ROCK! ROLL, ROSETTA, ROLL! PRESENTING SISTER ROSETTA THARPE, THE GODMOTHER OF ROCK & ROLL, by Tonya Bolden, illustrated by R. Gregory Christie, unpagged, published by Harper, an imprint of HarperCollinsPublishers, ©2023, ISBN 978-0-06-299438-7, (Elementary school, biography, picture book)

ROOTING FOR PLANTS: THE UNSTOPPABLE CHARLES S. PARKER, BLACK BOTANIST AND COLLECTOR, by Janice N. Harrington, illustrated by Theodore Taylor III, unpagged, published by Calkins Creek, an imprint of Astra Books for Young Readers, ©2023, ISBN 978-1-6626-8019-9, (Elementary school, nonfiction, picture book)

SAY MY NAME, by Joanna Ho, illustrated by Khoa Le, unpagged, published by Harper, an imprint of HarperCollins Publishers, ©2023, ISBN 978-0-06-320533-8, (Elementary school, nonfiction, picture book)

SCHOOL TRIP, written and illustrated by Jerry Craft, 247 pages, published by Quill Tree Books, an imprint of HarperCollinsPublishers, ©2023, ISBN 978-0-06-288553-1, (Elementary school/Middle school, fiction, graphic novel)

SOMETHING LIKE HOME, by Andrea Beatriz Arango, 248 pages, published by Random House Children's Books, a division of Penguin Random House LLC, ©2023, ISBN 978-0-593-56618-3, (Middle school, fiction)

SOMETHING SOMEDAY, by Amanda Gorman, illustrated by Christian Robinson, unpagged, published by Viking, a division of Penguin Random House LLC, ©2023, ISBN 978-0-593-20325-5, (Elementary school, fiction, picture book)

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SPANISH IS THE LANGUAGE OF MY FAMILY, by Michael Genhart, illustrated by John Parra, unpagged, published by Neal Porter Books, an imprint of Holiday House Publishing Inc., ©2023, ISBN 978-0-8234-5004-6, (Elementary school, fiction, picture book)



STARS OF THE NIGHT: THE COURAGEOUS CHILDREN OF THE CZECH KINDERTRANSPORT, by Caren Stelson, illustrated by Selina Alko, unpagged, published by Carolrhoda Books, an imprint of Lerner Publishing Group, Inc., ©2023, ISBN 978-1-5415-9068-3, (Elementary school, nonfiction, picture book)

THERE WAS A PARTY FOR LANGSTON by Jason Reynolds, illustrated by Jerome Pumphrey and Jarrett Pumphery, unpagged, published by Caitlyn Dlouhy Books, an imprint of Atheneum Books for Young Readers, ©2023, ISBN 978-1-5344-3944-3, (Elementary school, fiction, picture book)

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WALK, THE, by Winsome Bingham, illustrated by E.B. Lewis, unpagged, published by Abrams Books for Young Readers, an imprint of ABRAMS, ©2023, ISBN 978-1-4197-4772-4, (Elementary school, fiction, picture book)

WALK IN THE WOODS, A, by Nikki Grimes, illustrated by Jerry Pinkney and Brian Pinkney, unpagged, published by Neal Porter Books, an imprint of Holiday House Publishing, Inc., ©2023, ISBN 978-0-8234-4965-1, (Elementary school, poetry, picture book)

WE ARE ALL SO GOOD AT SMILING, by Amber McBride, 283 pages, published by Feiwel and Friends, an imprint of Macmillan Publishing Group, LLC, ©2023, ISBN 978-1-250-78038-6, (Middle school/High school, fiction)

WE COULD FLY, by Rhiannon Giddens, illustrated by Briana Mukodiri Uchendu, unpagged, published by Candlewick Press, ©2023, ISBN 978-1-5362-2254-8, (Elementary school, fiction, picture book)

WE STILL BELONG, by Christine Day, 249 pages, published by Heartdrum, an imprint of HarperCollins Publishers, ©2023, ISBN 978-0-06-306456-0, (Upper elementary school/Middle school, fiction)

WHAT YOUR RIBBON SKIRT MEANS TO ME: DEB HAALAND'S HISTORIC INAUGURATION, by Alexis Bunten, illustrated by Nicole Neidhardt, unpagged, published by Christy Ottaviano Books, an imprint of Little Brown and Company, ©2023, ISBN 978-0-316-43003-6, (Elementary school, nonfiction, picture book)

WHEN CLOUDS TOUCH US, by Thanhà Lai, 244 pages, published by Harper, an imprint of HarperCollinsPublishers, ©2023, ISBN 978-0-06-304700-6, (Middle school, fiction)



WHEN THE STARS CAME HOME, by Brittany Luby, illustrated by Natasha Donovan, unpagged, published by Little Brown and Company, an imprint of the Hachette Book Group, ©2023, ISBN 978-0-316-59249-9, (Elementary school, fiction, picture book)

WHEN YOU CAN SWIM, written and illustrated by Jack Wong, unpagged, published by Orchard Books, an imprint of Scholastic Inc., ©2023, ISBN 978-1-338-83096-5, (Elementary school, fiction, picture book)

WINDOW FISHING, by DK Dyson, illustrated by Rudy Gutierrez, unpagged, published by Alfred A. Knopf, an imprint of Penguin Random House Children's Books, a division of Penguin Random House LLC, ©2023, ISBN 978-0-593-42901-3, (Elementary school, fiction, picture book)

YOU GOTTA MEET MR. PIERCE! THE STORIED LIFE OF FOLK ARTIST ELIJAH PIERCE, by Chiquita Mullins Lee and Carmella Van Vleet, illustrated by Jennifer Mack-Watkins, unpagged, published by Kokila, an imprint of Penguin Random House LLC, ©2023, ISBN 978-0-593-40650-2, (Elementary school, biography, picture book)

ZORA, THE STORY KEEPER, by Ebony Joy Wilkins, illustrated by Dare Coulter, unpagged, published by Kokila, an imprint of Penguin Random House LLC, ©2023, ISBN 978-1-9848-1691-7, (Elementary school, fiction, picture book)

