

# JUVENILE MISCELLANY



FALL 2021 • VOLUME 1 • BROOKE CRUTHIRDS, EDITOR



Ellen Ruffin

*Juvenile Miscellany* is now at the end of another eventful year. As always, we are excited to share our de Grummond Collection treasures. In this month's issue, one of our donors, Cynthia Leitich Smith, affectionately referred to as "The Force," shares her thoughts about her new imprint, Heartdrum.

We have been busy as well: Brooke Cruthirds, our assistant curator, speaks about her recent experience with tintypes. Mandy McRaney mined through several of our digital collections only to select the work of Jan Pienkowski to share with you. Claire Thompson, our Keats Award coordinator, presents the Mock EJK, a great activity to use with students of all ages, where students evaluate picture books in both writing and illustration and select their favorites.

In the world at large, this year has been one of losses in our community: At this writing, we are one week out from the announcement of yet another passing of a children's literature author/illustrator—Jerry Pinkney, and that is following the loss of Beverly Cleary, Floyd Cooper, Lois Ehlert, Eloise Greenfield, Norton Juster, Kathleen Krull, Patricia Reilly Giff, April Pulley Sayre, and Gary Paulsen. We will also miss Teri Lesene. Teri wasn't a children's literature author or illustrator, but she taught and wrote about children's and young adult books while serving as a professor at Sam Houston State. My friend and colleague, Lisa Von Drasek lost her husband, Paul. Paul was a part of publishing for many years, and his parting sent waves throughout our community.

We also mourn the passing of Ted Lewin and Robert Quackenbush. Ted and Betsy delivered the de Grummond Lecture at the Kaigler Festival a few years ago, when a tornado warning was issued right in the middle of Jennifer Lanthier's EJK Honor Award acceptance speech for her book, *The Stamp Collector*. Jennifer stopped her speech immediately, and we ushered everyone into the stairwell at the Cochran Center—all 500 participants! One of my favorite moments from that experience is captured in a snapshot taken while waiting for the warning to pass. The melodramatic image shows Ted and Betsy striking hilarious poses, showing the humor of the bizarre (and for some, frightening) moment.





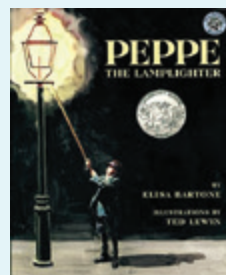
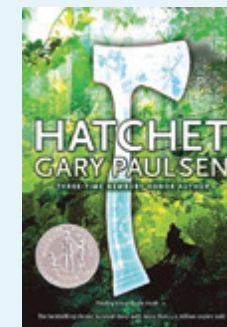
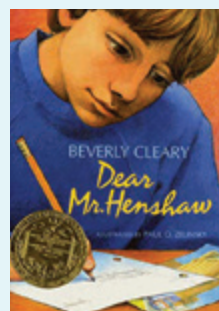
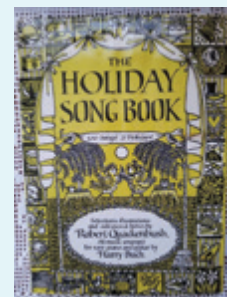
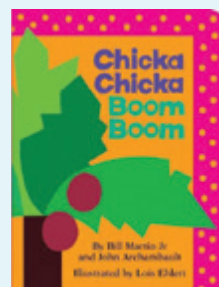
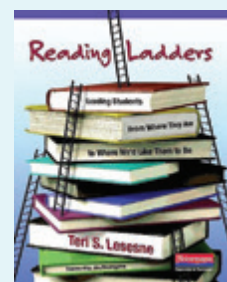
Margery and Robert Quackenbush with Nancy Winslow Parker at the Society of Illustrators reception hosted by the Ezra Jack Keats Foundation and the de Grummond Children's Literature Collection.

Robert Quackenbush was a friend and contributor to de Grummond. His energy for writing and illustrating books for children is obvious in that he wrote over 200 books for children. The most recent accrual from Robert unveiled even more about him. He was Dr. Quackenbush, having received a Ph.D. in childhood development and children's education. His contributions encompassed not only his books, but in addition, he was a teacher of illustration and writing—for both children and adults. Dr. Quackenbush believed that children can overcome emotional stress in their lives through art.

Our sincere condolences go to all of the family members of these wonderful and inspiring authors. We all feel a sense of collective loss, leaving a huge void in our midst.

The losses have affected all of us involved in children's literature. I spoke with Louise Borden recently. Louise is a donor to de Grummond, and her zeal for writing books for children is something to be admired ([louiseborden.com](http://louiseborden.com)). Her comment to me was, "Ellen, we have lost our luminaries. These people have contributed to the lives of children in countless ways. These are the people we strove to emulate."

I think I need to reframe my thoughts on our losses in 2021. Those people who aren't on Earth any longer are still here. Their work goes on—giving wonder and joy to children and adults. I want to thank them all for considering their audience, for teaching children how to see.



# USM Celebrates Curious George's 80th Birthday

By David Tisdale

One of the most popular characters in children's literature was recognized with a birthday party on Nov. 12 on The University of Southern Mississippi (USM) Hattiesburg campus when the school's de Grummond Children's Literature Collection hosted "Still Curious at 80!" at the Power House Courtyard across from Cook Library.

The event included music, refreshments, and pictures taken with Curious George and the Man in the Yellow Hat. It also marked the conclusion of the de Grummond Collection's 80-mile walk/run challenge honoring Curious George that began Sept. 1. Challenge awards were presented to the top three individuals and the top team with the most miles. Each participant received a challenge T-shirt. Remaining T-shirts are available for purchase.

The de Grummond Collection is fortunate to have in its holdings the papers of H. A. and Margret Rey, the creators of George.

"This celebration of Curious George's 80th year of life is one in which we marvel at the relevance George has maintained since his creation," said Ellen Ruffin, associate professor and curator of the de Grummond Children's Literature Collection. "The response to walking 80 miles for George's 80 years has been far and wide."



"If you have read Louise Borden's *The Journey That Saved Curious George*, you will know that there was a narrow escape the Reys made when escaping Paris [during World War II] as the Nazis were marching in. So, we celebrate."





## Welcome Sarah

Making her debut in the de Grummond Children's Literature Collection is Sarah Parrish from Mandeville, Louisiana. Sarah is adding a Master of Library and Information Sciences from USM to the master's in history she already holds. She has two years' experience working in Archives and Special Collections at the University of Mississippi. Also, at the University of Mississippi, Sarah worked as a copy editor and managing editor for the student newspaper. Before relocating to Hattiesburg, she worked as a copy editor and page designer for the news desk of a daily state newspaper in Little Rock, Arkansas. Her interests include archives, cultural history, and archival practices' effects on historical narratives. We are pleased to welcome Sarah Parrish to the collection, and already she has hit the ground running as an excellent collection processor and researcher.



*Entering into my practicum with the de Grummond Collection*, I had very little experience working with literary collections or children's literature. I come from a history background and was enthusiastic about the opportunity to get hands-on experience in a new area to broaden my knowledge base. My first assignment after getting shown around the facility, however, soon illustrated that children's literature was not so specific an area when it came to research appeal.

The research request came from documentary filmmakers for materials related to Margaret Bourke-White, an American photojournalist who lived from 1904 to 1971 and documented many of the social issues and momentous events of the 20th century. The subject was not a common one for de Grummond, as it holds no collection dedicated specifically to Bourke-White. It does, however, hold the collected research and publishing materials of Susan Goldman Rubin, who has written dozens of books aimed at young readers, including one published in 1999 about Bourke-White's life and career.

The producers, who were based internationally, had gone through the footnotes of Rubin's book and asked for any original material from the period of 1936-46 related to a few specific references. One related to an anecdote about President Franklin Roosevelt, and another concerned a quote about World War II attributed to a radio interview. I began my role in this request by familiarizing myself with the relevant sections of Rubin's book before starting to look through the Rubin Collection for any materials that matched the descriptions.

Ultimately, most of the materials tied to these footnotes were not original to de Grummond's collections and instead were

copies of materials that Rubin had found at other repositories during her research. My ability to fulfill this research request was limited, but pursuing it afforded me the opportunity to discover more about an important figure in the history of photography. Looking through Rubin's notes on Bourke-White, which mostly consisted of drafts of her own work and personal writings, I was able to learn more about the experiences and perspective of a woman who took part in coverage of monumental world events and achieved great success and recognition in a field with previously very few women.

Since that first request, I have assisted with various projects dealing directly and indirectly with children's literature and the people who craft it, learning more at every step about the format, context, and history of each collection that I encounter. The project that I have been working on most recently involves processing a collection of more than 600 ornate valentines dating from the beginning of the 19th century. The valentines were given to the de Grummond Collection by a donor who also provided a collection of children's books, with both collections having been amassed by Richard A. Neubert. These artifacts provide great insight into the cultural history and practices of the United States, Great Britain, and Germany relating to the manufacture of valentines, as well as the customs for exchanging them.

My very first experience within the de Grummond Collection perfectly illustrated to me how its contents have a breadth that encompasses children's literature and reaches beyond it, which has been continually reinforced in every project I have worked on over the course of my practicum. I am excited to see what else I will encounter before my time here is complete.

# The de Grummond Tintype

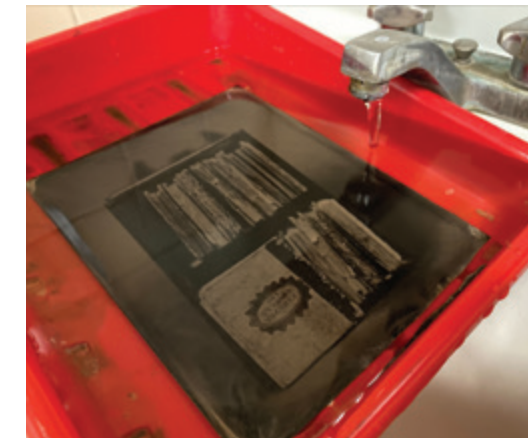
By Brooke Cruthirds



Back in April, the de Grummond Children's Literature Collection was preparing to receive Sharon Draper as the 2021 de Grummond Lecturer. We knew we had to come up with a really special gift for such an esteemed figure in the field of children's literature. It was decided we would commission Michael

Foster, a renowned Mississippi tintypist, to produce 10 tintypes of *The Infant's Library*, circa 1800. Tintypes were common mediums for photographs throughout the latter 1800s. The practice has since declined with the preference of easier, more efficient modes of photography. Mr. Foster is one of only two known photographers specializing in this antiquated, lost art form in our region. He mostly specializes in portraiture and Southern architecture (one of which was chosen for an album cover and landed Foster's work in an edition of *Rolling Stone* magazine). That said, watching him work is a bit like a child waiting to open a Christmas gift. The process of making just one image correctly is arduous and time consuming. The finished product is never a guarantee as each component (the lighting, the metal, the chemicals, the 200-year-old lens, the rinse, the experience of the photographer) has to be just so. After perfecting the process of this session, Foster created 10 unique, one-of-a-kind images plated on aluminum (not tin, as the name implies). The individual image is the product of a succession of correct steps from the flash of the bulb to the

rinse over the plate. The photographer only gets one shot. The clear picture and acidic edging that emerge in the rinse is a surprise each and every time. Mr. Foster noted that, for him, "photographing an artifact contemporary of the artform was a remarkable experience." We could not agree more. Traditionally, tintypes were housed in a protective casing called a union case. In keeping with this tradition, a special union case was designed specifically for the 2021 de Grummond Lecturer.



# Catching Up with Cynthia Leitich Smith



**Ellen Ruffin sits down with Cynthia Leitich Smith, winner of the 2021 NSK Neustadt Prize for Children's Literature, to discuss her new imprint, Heartdrum, her projects, and emerging indigenous literature.**

Ellen: I'd like to hear you talk a little bit about your special relationship with Harper [Collins Publisher].

CLS: Let's see. HarperCollins was my original children's book publisher. I began working with Rosemary Brosnan in the late 90s and my first book, *Jingle Dancer*, was published by her. It originally sold to Lonestar, which was lost in a merger, and then Rosemary moved to Morrow and then she bought it again. And while it was at Morrow, Harper acquired Morrow, and they got rid of Morrow Jr., but they kept her editorial team. So it is one of very few books that was originally acquired by one publisher, produced by a second, and released by a third.

Ellen: That's an incredible story! And that was your first book?

CLS: That was my first book. It was re-released in paperback under the Heartdrum imprint 21 years later, which we did in part to have a number of books that were more affordable so that we would have some paperbacks on that first list, and I folded in two of my other Harper books, *Indian Shoes* and *Rain Is Not My Indian Name*, with updated texts and author's notes. And we were able to have those re-illustrated by Cherokee illustrators and *Rain*, the cover, also re-illustrated so that we could bring in more indigenous visual artists into the process so that gave us an opportunity to kind of freshen everything up. It was fascinating to revisit your first novel after 20 years. All that said, I had a very, very long relationship with Brosnan.

When the multicultural boom went bust in the early 2000s, publishers tended to pull back to one well-established name (usually male) in each of what were considered the major underrepresented or marginalized communities, right? Jeff Bruchac, Lawrence Yep, there were a number of them, and they were all wonderful and humanist, but it was definitely

a retraction in opportunity. When I was faced with this, I essentially had two choices to make at that time: I could either fold, which a lot of people of my generation (by which, I don't mean, chronologically) in the industry who were "multicultural" did. We lost a whole wave that way. Or, I could adapt, and so I decided to write fantastical fiction. I published two YA gothics, one gothic series, one fantasy series. I published a Santa Claus picture book. I was like, "Ok, I will figure something else out if this isn't an option," and I was able to integrate indigenous characters as secondary characters in those fantastical worlds without anyone necessarily noticing or it being a problem. That veil of metaphor can cover many sins, but it can also cover many opportunities. So, I used that as a way to continue writing about gender empowerment and social justice and have diverse casts. In many ways, those works were just as diverse as the other work I'd been doing, but grown-ups didn't see that — kids saw it. And that worked for a good long while. I had just finished up the last book in that series, and I had thought at this point, I have achieved a certain level of name recognition. Hopefully, they will let me do one book. [laughter] So, I sold *Hearts Unbroken* to Candlewick. It was right on the wave of the initial we-need-diverse-books-conversation, which I was very involved in, and there was some opportunity there. These books were still considered very hard back then, and integrating native language was extremely hard. It was a product of multiple conversations, and having indigenous story structure was very challenging because if it was different, it was wrong and, therefore, lesser. But many things that are in indigenous literary tradition do directly conflict with certain western conventions because it's a different worldview.

Ellen: Right. Ya think?

CLS: I teach at the MFA program at Vermont College, so I'm part of these conversations all the time. You'll often hear someone say, "You must cut any character that isn't absolutely necessary and combine characters and get the cast as small and vital as you can." What is considered believable and resonant in terms of family structure in a western, mainstream character's world is very different. There was a lot of support for a diversity of authorship and characters on the page, but not necessarily literary tradition.

## **On how the imprint was started...**

CLS: I'm having breakfast with Ellen Oh, and she starts talking about a need for a Native American imprint, and I thought yes, I strongly agree with that. We haven't cracked 2% of our presentation.

Ellen: I'm so glad she thought, I mean, that was her idea?

CLS: That was completely Ellen. I mean, she is the fairy godmother of the story. She is really the hero. I completely agreed. It could be a place where you could do Native literary tradition and sensibility and people would understand that what we were doing was for a purpose, and we could frame it as such (and by "we," at that point, I mean the community). And I said, that's great. And she said, "And you should head it up." I said, "I'm flattered, but I'm not famous or fancy enough to take something like that on."

Ellen: [gasps]

CLS: She said, "But look, there are all these author-led imprints. We've got one by Kwame [Alexander], we've got one by Rick [Riordan]... and the thing they have in common is that they are generally men in the industry." She said, "I really believe that women in the industry have a tendency to talk ourselves out of as opposed to talk ourselves up."

Ellen: Which you were doing!

CLS: Which I was doing. I admit it. But, in truth, I am not Rick or Kwame. They are huge commercial names. But I am in a unique position because I didn't quit. There are elders in the community—Virginia Driving Hawk Sneve, and Joseph Bruchac, and Tim Tingle—who have been doing the work for a long time and have been nothing but gracious, generous and supportive of me. And there are new voices, including some huge rising stars, like Traci Sorrell and Angeline Boulley and Eric Gansworth, Darcy Little Badger, but they're really still within their first five years of publication in children's and young adult books, and they're not necessarily published across age markets, formats, and genres, or writing teachers, per se. So that kind of left me in this strange little Gen X gap.

For many years, I was the only indigenous author at whatever event it was, and if I wasn't, there might've been one other

person and that was it. It was really very thin, and the books weren't there, and to be candid, no one seemed to miss them. There were plenty of books that did have some indigenous content, most of which were written by non-natives. Some of them were not good. A few of them were very good. And one of the challenges that the publishers were expressing were that "there just weren't those [native] voices out there. We would love to publish more Native American authors, but due to these unfortunate circumstances with history, they don't exist. This makes us very sad." And I thought, they are literally right in front of me.

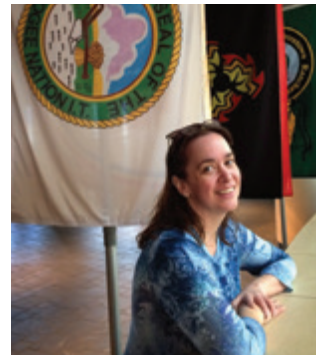
There have been, for many years, some excellent small press books that have featured indigenous authors and illustrators, particularly first nations, from within the borders of Canada. That is a long-standing thing, and there are new tribal presses, and they have and always should be the leaders in this conversation. But there weren't opportunities at major presses, which creates resource issues, access issues. A lot of our authors can't afford to send themselves to conferences. [They can't] afford the kind of advertising that allows someone to compete. We needed to send a signal to the industry that these books were not necessarily just "passion projects"; they were viable and competitive.

Ellen: STORIES!

CLS: Stories in terms of quality and commercialism.

Ellen YES!

**To read the interview in its entirety, please visit [degrummond.org](http://degrummond.org).**



## **Check out these upcoming titles from the Heartdrum imprint.**



# Jan Pieńkowski Pop-up Books

By Amanda McRaney



The Jan Pieńkowski Papers, housed at the de Grummond Children's Literature Collection contain a treasure trove of insight into the creative process of pop-up and movable books. The collection includes original illustrations and drawings, paintings, dummy books, page proofs, typescripts, correspondence, photographs, greeting cards, and printed material created and accumulated by Jan Pieńkowski between 1964 and 2001.

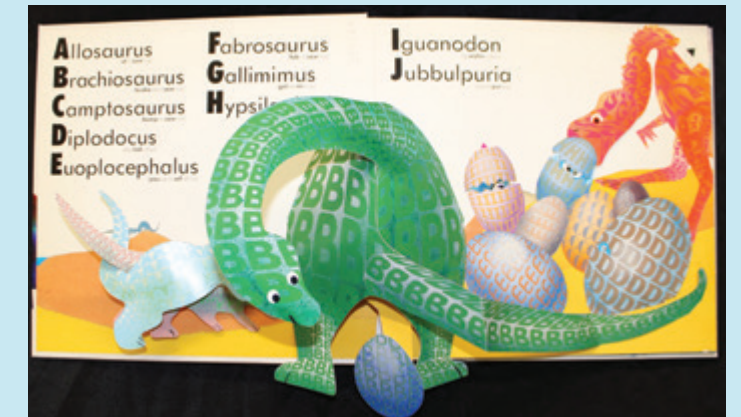
Pieńkowski began his career as an illustrator designing posters and greeting cards. His first book for children

was published in 1971 in collaboration with author Joan Aiken. In 1979, Pieńkowski published his first pop-up book, *Haunted House*, which earned him his second Kate Greenaway Medal. He has since published more than 140 books, most of which can be found in the de Grummond Children's Literature Book Collection.

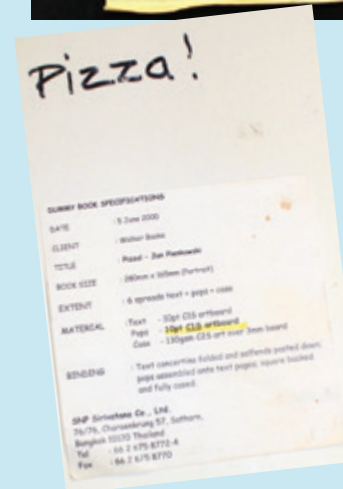
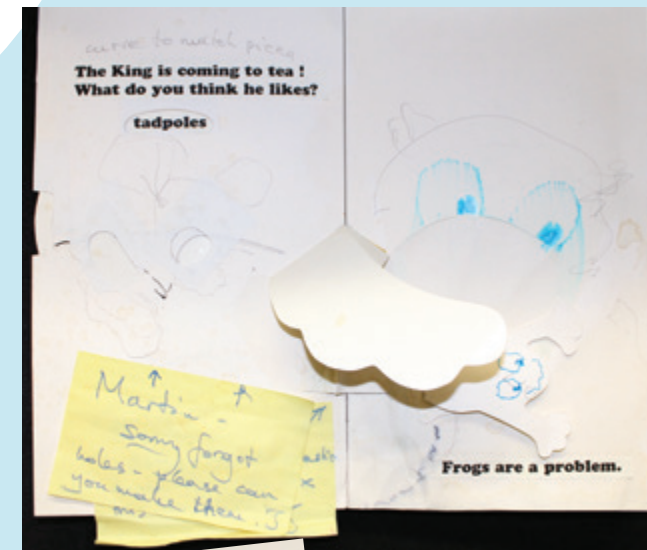
Pictured here are a few selections of original artwork from *ABC Dinosaurs and Other Prehistoric Creatures*, *Haunted House*, *Pizza! A Yummy Pop-up Book*, *Zoo: Colour-in Book*, and *The First Noël: A Christmas Carousel*. We have also included a few images of his published work to highlight the stark contrast between the concept art and the dazzling final illustrations.



This illustration in *Pizza!* is very similar to the original artwork, but the text has been changed.

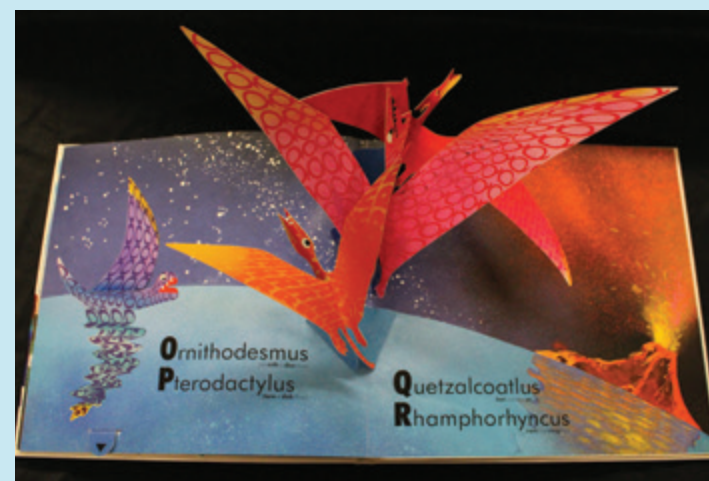


Original blank hardcover dummy and final published illustration of the first two pages of *ABC Dinosaurs and Other Prehistoric Creatures*.



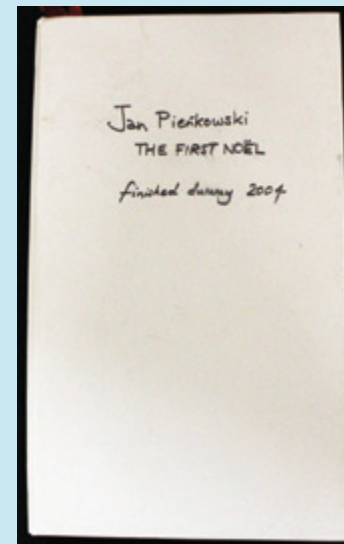
Top: Blank dummy pages with author notes for *Pizza!*

Left: Front cover of a blank hardcover dummy with printed specifications for *Pizza! A Yummy Pop-up Book*.



Original hardcover dummy with hand-colored spreads and pasted text and the final published illustration of the pterosaurs in *ABC Dinosaurs and Other Prehistoric Creatures*.

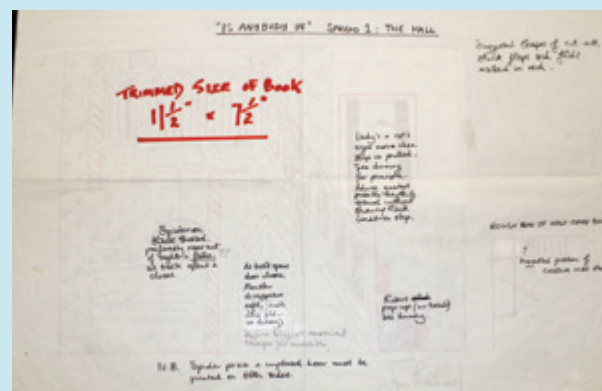
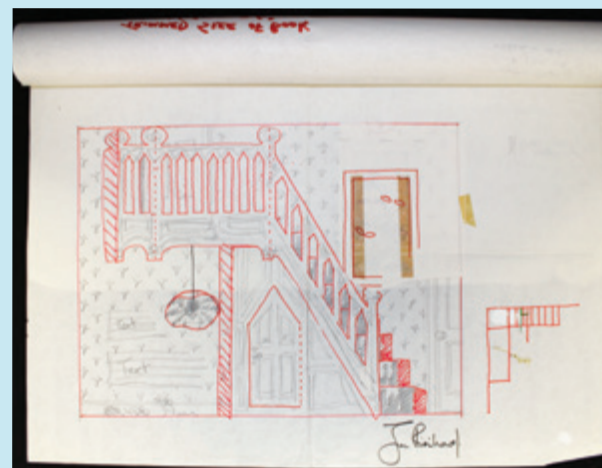
# Mock Ezra Jack Keats Award



Finished dummy for *The First Noël: A Christmas Carousel*. This papercut design carousel book depicts scenes from the Nativity.



Original ink illustration of flamingos for Zoo: Colour-in Book.



Original preparatory illustrations with author notes for the first two pages of *Haunted House*, initially titled *Is Anybody In?*

By Claire Thompson



Three years ago, I received an email from John Scott, the Lower School Librarian at Friends School of Baltimore, expressing interest in setting up a Mock EJK Award at his school. They already conducted a Mock Caldecott and wanted another picture book award for a kindergarten class.

But the experience went far beyond her expectations – “It was empowering to watch these children enthusiastically embrace the criteria and apply it to a selection of books. As a result, even after my term on the committee ended, I continued to lead Mock awards each year.”

One of the teachers commented, “The Ezra Jack Keats Mock Award was so powerful for my third graders to experience. The students were able to look at the text and illustrations in ways they had not done before. They read about diversity, family, and heartfelt experiences. It was special to see my students learn through the eyes of a committee judge!”



At around the same time, our EJK Committee chair, Caroline Ward, was working with third grade classes on a mock, or parallel, award in the expectation that the students’ reactions to the books would inform her work on the “real” committee. “While a Mock EJK Award could be adapted to any grade from kindergarten up to even graduate

In the fall of 2018, after an enthusiastic reception by the EJK Foundation, the Friends School of Baltimore initiated the first Mock Ezra Jack Keats Award for a children’s book published in 2018. The judges were students from two kindergarten classes. For two months, the children studied, discussed, and voted on over 20 books. It was such a success they did it again the following year! The Award Ceremony can be seen at [youtube.com/watch?v=urpcKcDk-X8](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=urpcKcDk-X8).

school, we chose third grade, as their reading fluency gave us more flexibility. They could read the books themselves, be read to, or a combination of the two.” She knew that the books considered would mirror the diversity of the best in picture book publishing. The framework of the Mock process consisted of an introductory session on Ezra Jack Keats, his work, and the award, including how past winners met the criteria. They also spoke about “the spirit of EJK.” A follow-up session introduced the 12 eligible titles and a set of kid-friendly criteria developed by teachers and the librarian at Friends School of Baltimore:

Friends’ librarian John Scott said “We continued to see great results in students deepening their critical thinking skills as they applied the EJK criteria throughout their school experience.”

Fran Morrissey’s kindergarten students are participating in the process this year and even added “explodes my brain and makes me want to learn” to the criteria! She adds, “It has been wonderful to experience how the process continues to deepen the children’s ability to analyze, discuss, and love literature.”

Technology educator Andy Hanes mentioned the impact of Friends School’s collaboration with Eastern Michigan University students and how their resulting conversations helped to analyze the books to compile their short list. Hanes added that the kindergarteners had strong evidence to support their final vote steeped in their understanding of the criteria.

The highlight for teacher Diana White is always the same, watching the children’s excitement when the awards are announced. “After they have put in weeks and weeks of reading and responding to text, to see a book (or two) that they are familiar with on a winning list is a reward for all of their hard work.”



- Childhood
- Family
- Diversity
- Words & Pictures Work Together
- Excites Your Brain
- Hits your Heart
- Makes You Want to Learn



In celebration of the 35th annual Ezra Jack Keats Award, the Keats Foundation encouraged educators across the country to have their classrooms participate in a “Mock EJK Award,” where students would model the real EJK Award by reading, discussing, and evaluating a selection of eligible books and select a book to be honored in a mock award ceremony. A Mock EJK webinar was presented, [youtube.com/watch?v=v0qyv5xAae8&t=54s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v0qyv5xAae8&t=54s), followed by the formation of a Facebook Community Support Group.

The Mock EJK Award program, [ezra-jack-keats.org/mock-ejk-award-lesson-plans-materials](https://ezra-jack-keats.org/mock-ejk-award-lesson-plans-materials), available for both virtual and in-person settings, is a group activity that can be adapted for any

age from kindergarten through high school. It is encouraged that mock awards coincide with the real EJK Award ceremony each year, and the online toolkit has a timeline of lesson plans leading up to that ceremony. Once registered, a list of eligible books for mock award selection will be sent to the registrant. Currently, the EJK Foundation makes available a list of eligible titles from which teachers and librarians can choose.

The toolkit includes: sample criteria and a sample voting process, ideas for producing your remote award ceremony, background materials about Ezra Jack Keats, art project ideas and clip art, and a Mock EJK Award Medallion.



*L to R: Fran Morrissey, Diana White, and John Scott at the Children's Book Festival, 2019*

## Ezra Jack Keats Award Virtual Exhibit



In 2012, the de Grummond Children's Literature Collection at The University of Southern Mississippi became a co-sponsor of the Ezra Jack Keats Award. According to the Keats Foundation website, “The de Grummond is recognized as one of this country's premier collections of children's literature and is the home of the Keats Archive.” The Award was moved to Hattiesburg, Mississippi, and an EJK Award Honor Category was created.

The EJK Award Ceremony is held in early April at the Fay B. Kaigler Children's Book Festival on the campus of The University of Southern Mississippi. The Festival, celebrating excellence in children's and young adult literature, began in 1968 and is attended by over 300 teachers and librarians each year.

De Grummond features virtual exhibits on the de Grummond website under “News and Events,” including a history of the Keats Award at USM, all viewable at [usmspecialcollections.omeka.net/exhibits/show/ejkaward/background-of-the-award](https://usmspecialcollections.omeka.net/exhibits/show/ejkaward/background-of-the-award).

This exhibit offers a look into the Keats Award luncheon and accompanying festivities at the Kaigler Children's Book Festival from the years 2012 to 2021, with comments from the winners, candid photos, acceptance speeches, and commemorative posters. For the past two years of the pandemic, the Virtual Award Ceremony is available for viewing on YouTube.



The 2022 Kaigler Children's Book Festival will continue to be held virtually next year. Out of an abundance of caution and for the safety of festival participants, the festival steering committee has made this decision due to the ongoing threat of COVID-19. The dates for next year's festival are April 6-8, 2022, with the Keats Award tentatively scheduled

for April 7 at 1-2:30 p.m. CST. Keep up with the evolving details at [usm.edu/childrens-book-festival](https://usm.edu/childrens-book-festival).





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