



Kite Tales

Society of Children's Book
Writers & Illustrators
~Los Angeles

Kite Tales Home

Fall 2013 Volume 24 Number 3

www.scbwisocal.org

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SCBWI Central-Coastal California Retreat

Shaping Your Manuscript for Publication

January 17-19, 2014

4:30 p.m. Friday – 2:00 p.m. Sunday

Old Mission Santa Barbara, Mission Renewal Center
2201 Laguna Street, Santa Barbara, CA 93105

Are you so close to your work-in-progress that you've lost perspective on its strengths and weaknesses? Then it's time for new eyes on your work from colleagues and editors.

Core Group faculty members include:

Nonfiction

Hilary Breed Van Dusen, Senior Editor, Candlewick Press

Picture Books

Sylvie Frank, Associate Editor, Paula Wiseman Books,
Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers

Middle Grade Novels

Jeanette Larson, Senior Executive Editor, Houghton Mifflin
Harcourt Books for Young Readers

Young Adult Novels

Noa Wheeler, Editor, Henry Holt Books for Young Readers

For more information and to register, go to www.scbwicencal.org/retreat

Registration Deadline: November 30, 2013

Questions? 805-581-1906 or AlexisInCA@aol.com



Who's Who in SCBWI-Los Angeles

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Writer's Days: Sarah Laurenson & Lee Wind
Working Writer's Retreat:
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& Sarah Laurenson
Down The Rabbit Hole Sunday Field Trip:
Dawne Knobbe
Creative Toolbox: Sally Jones Rogan
PAL Member Liaison: Candace Ryan
Contest Coordinator: Nutschell Windsor
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Critiquenic Coordinator, Catering Coordinator

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SCBWI-L.A. Regional News

"It's astounding. Time is fleeting. Madness takes its toll."

The Time Warp: *Rocky Horror Picture Show*

Time flies (except when we're anxiously awaiting a response from an editor, an art director, an agent, a book reviewer, or a Beta reader). It's a cliché for a good reason.

Time is finite. As much as we might love more hours in a day or days in a week, they won't magically appear.

Lack of time may not be the real roadblock to achieving our goals. Others are achieving their dreams in the same 24-hour days.

Maybe it's time to stop beating our heads against that time brick wall. We can't make time, but we can divvy it up in a different way by looking at our priorities.

If we didn't have to sleep, we'd have a lot more time to devote to whatever we wish. But sleep is kind of important.

If we didn't have to eat, we'd have a decent chunk of time to fill with pursuing our dreams. Turns out eating is one of those necessities in life.

We sleep, we eat, we may work to have a place to sleep and food to eat. That's more time spent. And then what? Family, friends, chores... A seemingly endless parade clamoring for a bit of our precious time. It's the Life To-Do List that never gets completely crossed off.

If we take a week and jot down what we spend time on, we'll have a record of our current set of priorities. Not the priorities we wish we had, but rather the ones we actually put into practice. These are the activities that we have stamped important by our actions.

"Sometimes it's the smallest decisions that can change your life forever."

Keri Russell

(continued next page)



Who's Who at Kite Tales

KITE TALES is a newsletter published by the L.A. Chapter of the Society of Children's Book Writers and Illustrators for the SCBWI Tri-Regions of Southern California. Information published in KITE TALES does not constitute an endorsement by SCBWI and/or SCBWI-L.A.

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Submission Deadlines:

Spring - Jan. 15 for March 1 issue
Summer - April 15 for June 1 issue
Fall - July 15 for Sept. 1 issue
Winter - Oct. 15 for Dec. 1 issue

Send comments, articles, great news, questions, etc. to Maggie Grinnell at walkingthruwords@yahoo.com or Beth Navarro at kಿತetaleseditor@gmail.com.

Columns - 500 words max
Features - 800 words max
Interviews - 1400 words max
Poetry - 150 words max

Critique Connections:

Contact Sheryl Scarborough at mediasherpa@gmail.com.

Toot Your Horn & Ads: Follow instructions on page 32 of this issue.

Where's the creative niche in our current list and what's right above it? Can those be swapped? We give that a weeklong test run and see how that feels. Then take another look. Do another swap. Another week of trying it on; keeping in mind that we may need a month to squeeze into a new priority list until it's comfortable. Record – Swap–Test, Record – Swap – Test, until the priorities in our hearts match the ones in our lives and we are living our dreams.



To Thine Own Self Be True.

Sarah Laurenson

Co-Regional Advisor
SCBWI Los Angeles

INSPIRATION CORNER



You get ideas from daydreaming.
You get ideas from being bored.
You get ideas all the time.
The only difference between



PHOTO: Kimberly Butler

writers and
other people is
we notice when
we're doing it.

– Neil Gaiman



Orange County/Inland Empire News

Hi Everyone,

Q and I are hard at work on **Editor's Day**. Join us for this amazing event on **Saturday, October 5, 2013** at Cal State University Fullerton. To kick off the weekend we are calling on all illustrators attending the conference to take part in our Friday night pre-conference art exhibit on October 4th. All registered attendees are invited to join our stellar editors and agents in viewing the work of our talented artists. The conference follows on Saturday, October 5, in the Titan Theater at Cal State Fullerton.

Our guest speakers are **Joanna Cardenas**, Viking Children's Books; **Lisa Cheng**, Running Press Kids, **Sara Goodman**, St. Martins Press, **Shauna (Fay) Rossano**, G. P. Putnam's Sons; and Associate Art Director **Lauren Rille**, Simon & Schuster Children's Books. We have a few other special guests who will soon be announced.

We're thrilled with our speaker line up! **Joanna Cardenas** edits and acquires books for all ages. She is looking for quirky and offbeat picture books; classic middle grade featuring big voices; and young adult projects that focus on friendship, family, or a clever mystery (not romance).

Lisa Cheng is looking for picture books, especially ones with novelties like lift-the-flaps, as well as both middle-grade and teen fiction told in a strong voice. **Sara Goodman** edits mostly young adult fiction and commercial women's fiction. A few of her best selling authors include Rainbow Rowell, Courtney Summers, Sarah Rayner and Sarah McCarry. **Shauna Rossano** works on everything from picture books to young adult novels. While open to books for all ages, she is currently on the hunt for middle grade fiction with a strong voice (magical realism always welcome!), robust historical fiction with a commercial hook, and funny/quirky picture books.

Lauren Rille will provide written critiques of illustrators' promotional pieces, and she will participate in the portfolio review and opening night art exhibit. Lauren works on picture book projects and book covers, including those of Holly Black's books.

Editor's Day is packed with opportunities, including manuscript critiques, pitch sessions, illustrator's art exhibit, First Pages panel, portfolio displays, lunch with a speaker, PAL book displays, and book signings, and giveaways. For details visit: <http://events.constantcontact.com/register/event?llr=nukh7cjab&oidk=a07e7uzycg1f0d0cea5>

Or the California Orange County Chapter at www.scbwi.org or www.scbwisocal.org.

On another note we had great fun at our thirteenth annual **Spring Retreat** at the South Coast Winery Resort and Spa in May. Since our thirteenth Retreat happened to take place in 2013. We couldn't resist calling it, "Make Your Own Luck," and focusing on revision and marketing. The weather was gorgeous; the flowers and grapevines were spectacular; and the wild bunnies and quail were on hand. The colorful hot air



The Real OC Editors—Spring Retreat: Wendy McClure—Senior Editor, Albert Whitman Teen; Sally Morgridge—Assistant Editor at Holiday House; Andrea Welch—Editor at Beach Lane Books; Kate Sullivan—Editor for Little, Brown Books for Young Readers



...ORANGE COUNTY/INLAND EMPIRE NEWS



Agent's Day - The Real OC Agents - Stephen Fraser, Kerry Sparks, Taylor Martindale, Susan Hawk

balloons drifting through the morning skies were just icing on the cake.

Our outstanding speakers included Andrea Welch, Beach Lane Books; Kate Sullivan, Little Brown Book for Young Readers; Wendy McClure, Albert Whitman, and Sally Morgridge, Holiday House.

On Saturday we gave writing assignments by table. We asked each group to craft a short retelling of a classic book but in a different genre. For example, *The Cat in the Hat* as horror and *Little Women* as true crime. The stories were read on Sunday and the results were hilarious! We were very impressed with *Goodnight Moon* as a science fiction. Here is a sample of what the creative team of Merrily Kutner, Kathy Kottoras, Elana Azose, Joyce Lee and Karina Penkethman came up with:

Goodnight Moon/ May The Fourth Be With You

In the stainless steel room
There was a transporter
A computer
And a hologram of
Ray Bradbury jumping over the crater
And two little microchips
And a pair of blips
Goodnight Mars, Goodnight stars
Goodnight Ray Bradbury coming home from afar

The day ended with the announcement of the winners of our annual writing contest: Picture Books First, Jamie Payne; honorable mention, Elana Azose; Middle Grade First, Lori Polydoros, honorable mention, Marcia Berneger; YA First, Julie Robbins Rose, honorable mention, Heather Buchta. Congratulations to all! It was the best retreat ever! Save the date and join us from May 2 – 4th, 2014 for our next Spring Writer's Retreat.



Spring Writer's Retreat - Contest Winners

Kudos to Gina Capaldi! Gina has twice been a speaker for us at OC events. She is also the co-author and illustrator of *Red Bird Sings*, written with Q. Pearce. Gina's illustrations from *Red Bird Sings* have been acquired for the collection of the prestigious Mazza Museum of children's book illustration.

We'd also like to give a big shout out to all of our wonderful volunteers, Lori Polydoros, Bev Plass, Merrily Kutner, Priscilla Burris and all those who jump right in to help us at each event. We couldn't do it without you.

Best,
Francesca Rusackas RA
and
Q. L. Pearce ARA

Visit us at; www.bloodmoonharbor.com but only if you dare.



Article Writing at 1.2 Miles Per Hour

by Rebecca Langston-George

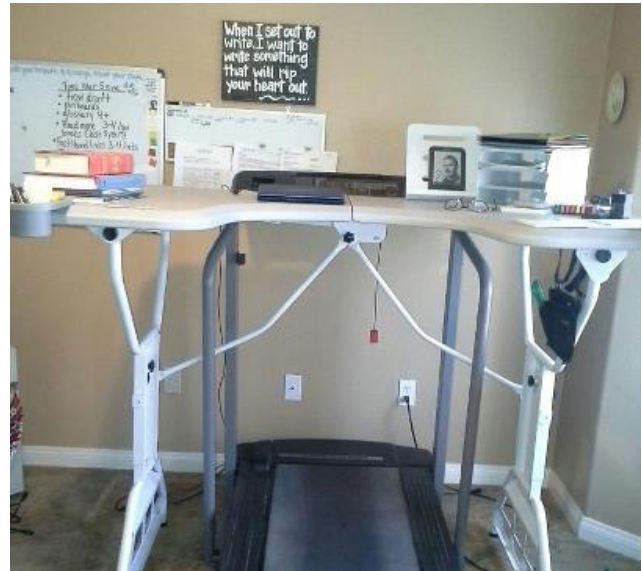
Jane Yolen has long credited the secret to her productivity to BIC: Butt In Chair. While I certainly agree with the premise, writers today have another choice, one Dr. James Levine of the Mayo Clinic believes is much healthier than plopping your butt in a chair for hours on end: the treadmill desk.

A treadmill desk is simply a treadmill with a shelf, desk or other flat surface to allow the walker to perform desk work while simultaneously walking. Many people create their own by altering shelving units. You can find desks and shelves specifically designed for this purpose and some companies sell treadmills with the desk incorporated.

My journey to walking and writing began when I read a post on Verla Kay's Blue Board in 2011. Children's writer Helene Boudreau linked to an article about writing on her treadmill desk, which she created from shelving. Being a multi-tasker, I instantly saw this as an opportunity to do two sorely needed things at once: write and exercise.

Having inherited a dusty twenty-five year old treadmill, I took to the internet to find an inexpensive way to attach a shelf. I found the Surf Shelf, a small plastic platform which attaches to the treadmill, for \$29. It was a good start and served me well for two years, but the shelf is quite small and I had to remove it each time I needed to adjust the controls.

Recently I graduated to a Trek Desk, which is a very large free-standing U-shaped desk that stands over the treadmill. Mine is pictured above (over the same ancient treadmill). It allows me to keep all my supplies



A Trek Desk lets you write on the move.

within arm's reach. My treadmill writing time has doubled since it arrived, making me a true believer in treadmill desks. When I share my enthusiasm, I get a lot of questions.

"How can you walk and write at the same time?" you ask. It's actually pretty simple. Most of us have walked and talked on our cell phones at the same time with little to no conscious effort.

"Don't you get out of breath?" The Mayo Clinic recommends that people walk 1.0 to 1.5 miles per hour while working at a treadmill desk. That's very slow, requiring little exertion.

(continued next page)



“Can you really be creative while exercising?” Personally, I find I’m more creative. There’s something about the slow pace of walking that makes my fingers want to keep the rhythm. The activity seems to get both the blood and the creative juices flowing.

“How much time do you spend writing on the treadmill?” I teach full-time so most of my writing is in the evening. I try to get in an hour a day on the treadmill, much of which is spent writing, but some is spent on email. When I tire of writing on the treadmill, I move to a traditional desk or just stand at the treadmill. I wrote the majority of my last book and this article at 1.2 miles per hour.

“Have you lost a lot of weight since writing and walking?” Are you sure you don’t have any other questions? Okay, the answer is I’ve lost a little. Since you walk at a slow pace you’re not going to see rapid-fire weight loss. I do have much more energy. One of the best bonuses is I have less fatigue and fewer pain symptoms from fibromyalgia.

If you like Jane Yolen’s advice but want to get your butt in motion too, here are some links to read more about the benefits of treadmill desks. You can also join me on Pinterest and check out my pin board on treadmill desks. Happy walking!

<http://pinterest.com/rebeccalgeorge/treadmill-desks/>

http://usatoday30.usatoday.com/tech/news/2005-06-07-office-fit_x.htm?csp=34

<http://www.nbcnews.com/video/rock-center/50409976#50409976>

<http://trekdesk.com/health-benefits>

<http://officewalkers.ning.com/>

BOOK TALK ONLINE

Book Talk is a monthly book discussion group taking place on the SCBWI Central-Coastal California listserv. Discussions begin on the first of each month, facilitated by Lynn Becker (lynnb@mac.com). Readers may join in anytime during the month with comments or questions about the featured book. Book Talk is open to all members of the Southern California SCBWI who are signed up for the regional listserv.

To become a member of the listserv, go to:
<http://groups.yahoo.com/groups/SCBWI-CCal/>

SEPTEMBER

Out of the Easy, by Ruta Sepetys
We read her deeply personal debut, so how does she do with her follow-up?

OCTOBER

Up! Tall! and High! by Ethan Long
2013 Geisel winner--deceptively simple easy reader with a twist. If you want to know how to write one, study this!

NOVEMBER

Out of My Mind, by Sharon Draper
Extremely compelling--strong Voice--Melody has cerebral palsy and can’t speak, so no one recognizes her potential.

DECEMBER

Eleanor & Park, by Rainbow Rowell (YA)
Standout debut novel of first love, misfit-high school-style.

JANUARY

The Day the Crayons Quit, written by Drew Daywalt, illustrated by Oliver Jeffers (PB)
Watch out! One boy’s crayons are venting! It’s great picture book fun.



Featured Illustrator: Laura-Susan Thomas

To work, I commute 100 feet to my studio, an old garden shed in our backyard full of toys, my kid’s drawings, and books to inspire me. We read all the time in my house growing up, picture books to chapter books to comic books. For 11 years, I worked for Walt Disney Imagineering as an illustrator and a designer, creating the biggest stage sets anywhere for many of the Disney Parks and getting to work with so many talented, creative people!



(left) I have filled my studio with objects that inspire me.

(below) The Mice on the Moon,” the cover of Carus Publishing’s “Babybug,” March, 2013

All along, I have been drawn to picture books and have wanted to find a way to become a children’s book illustrator. What a fabulous place to stretch my imagination and let out all of the crazy characters who run around in my

head! Through painting and illustrating for children, I get to be a kid again everyday.

To start a job, I sketch like crazy in black and white marker and pencil. If I work in color, I use acrylics and gouache and



sometimes do finish painting digitally with Wacom tablet in Corel Painter. For black and white work, I am currently in love with my Faber Castel Manga brush pens. They come in black and warm and cool shades of grey.

SCBWI Central-Coastal
SAVE THE DATES
For registration information, go to <http://www.scbwicencal.org/>

September 21, 2013
Workshop
What Every Writer Needs to Know About Research with Angelica Carpenter
Bakersfield

October 6, 2013
Walkabout
Ventura

October 26, 2013
28th Annual Writers’ Day
For registration information, go to <http://www.scbwicencal.org/>
Thousand Oaks

December 8, 2013
Holiday Schmooze
Santa Barbara

January 17-19, 2014
Retreat “Perfect Your Plot”
Santa Barbara

SCBWI Central Coastal California

WRITERS’ DAY

October 26, 2013
9:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.
California Lutheran University, Thousand Oaks, CA 91360

FEATURING

Tamar Brazis, Editorial Director,
Abrams Books for Young Readers

Caroline Donofrio, Associate Editor,
Razorbill / Penguin Young Readers Group

Carisa Klüver, Editor, Digital-Storytime.com

Amy Lennex, Senior Editor, Sleeping Bear Press

Catherine Linka, Valerie Hobbs,
Alexis O’Neill and Greg Pincus

For registration information, go to www.scbwicencal.org/writersday



Go to www.scbwisocal.org/calendar.htm
for information on regional events.

SCBWI EVENT CALENDAR – Save These Dates!

MONTH	DATE	DAY	TYPE	REGION	DESCRIPTION
SEPTEMBER	20-22	Fri-Sun	EVENT	LA	Working Writer's Retreat
	21	Sat	EVENT	CC	Workshop – <i>What Every Writer Needs to Know about Research</i> , with Angelica Carpenter
OCTOBER	26	SAT	EVENT	CC	Writer's Day
NOVEMBER	9	SAT	EVENT	LA	Illustrator's Day
JANUARY	17-19	Fri-Sun	EVENT	CC	Retreat – "Perfect Your Plot"
FEBRUARY	21-23	Fri-Mon	EVENT	INT'L	SCBWI Annual Winter Conference

Writing Connections



IS YOUR MANUSCRIPT GIVING YOU THE BLUES?

Are you ready to be published but your picture book manuscript isn't? Maybe you need a *new* way of looking at your work?

- Learn the Diagramming Method and you will understand the underlying structure of a story and what makes successful picture books "tick."
- Discover how to revise your current and future work to get published.
- Study independently on-line with an award winning picture book author and UCLA Extension Writers Program instructor.

Professional Critique Services provide:

- Detailed writing suggestions
- Grammar and punctuation
- Verse rhyme and scansion
- Line edits
- Story Diagram
- Publishing Market Advice

Don't you think it's time the world saw your work?

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The Power of Genre Fiction

by Andrew Harwell

At every conference I attend, someone wants to know: “What’s the next big thing?” I always sense that this person is hoping I’ll keep my answer short – “unicorns” or “cyborgs” or even “realistic fiction” – because what this person is *really* hoping is that I’ll give him or her a golden ticket to a book deal. Just write a realistic story about a cyborg unicorn, and you’re set! If only writing great books were that easy.

But I think underneath that question about trends is another question, one about high concepts. A quick look at the middle grade and young adult market today reveals that we are in something of a golden age for genre fiction, from fantasy and sci-fi to thrillers and all-new hybrids. Even books that on the surface seem to be set in the real world, like Gayle Forman’s *If I Stay*; A.S. King’s *Everybody Sees the Ants*; or Rebecca Stead’s Newbery winner, *When You Reach Me*; can take unexpectedly surreal turns, and young readers aren’t merely accepting these elements, they’re embracing them. As a person who grew up playing pretend and reading accordingly, I love that so many fantastical genres all seem to fall under the general umbrella of “books for young people.” And I see why writers are eager to know which of these elements readers will be clamoring for next.

What I want to tell you is, the trick isn’t to find the concept *du jour*, it’s to use whatever concept you choose to say something about real people.

A few years ago, I attended a panel at the Center for Fiction in which some of my favorite authors attempted to answer the question of why fantasy matters. Their guesses were as varied as fantasy stories themselves, but one thing all the panelists agreed on is that the power in fantasy – and in all genre fiction – lies in the resonance between what is recognizable and what is strange. In

monster stories like Mary Shelley’s *Frankenstein*, the question of what it means to be a monster allows us to explore what it means to be a human in ways we’ve never done before. When the hero of Ursula Le Guin’s *A Wizard of Earth Sea* faces his ultimate adversary – a shadow version of himself – readers are faced with the idea that sometimes our struggles with others are actually struggles within ourselves.

And yet these writers never have to come out and say what they’re up to, exactly – to teach their readers a lesson, which we all know readers hate. In fact, the resonance between the fantasy and the reality does more than just carry these ideas in visually memorable ways – it *creates* them. Dystopian settings, as one example, resonate because they allow teens to see beyond their current place in the world order, to ask who they’d be if grades suddenly didn’t matter and their future was no longer a given.

So maybe you do want to write about those cyborg unicorns. Maybe what you’re really writing about is what it means to be a construct of something already imaginary – two degrees removed from real, like a photo-shopped celebrity. And what teen hasn’t wondered what *that* feels like?

If your concept tells us something about ourselves we hadn’t even realized we were wondering, it may just be the next big thing.



Andrew Harwell is an Editor of middle grade and young adult fiction at HarperCollins Children’s Books. He is one of the faculty for the SCBWI Working Writers’ Retreat in September.



So an illustrator goes to a SCBWI Conference....And comes home inspired. I am not alone

by Laura Hoffman

After finishing the whirlwind of energy, learning, camaraderie and parties that were my 4th consecutive SCBWI conference since 2010, things are finally sinking in. Every year, I find myself in a different place in my journey as an illustrator, and the conference experience has helped me on my way. The more I attend these conferences, the more humbled I become, being surrounded by a sea of talent.



Henry Winkler (the fonz) and Laura Hoffman, illustrator

SCBWI attendees as the award-winning authors and illustrators, top editors and agents that speak to us.

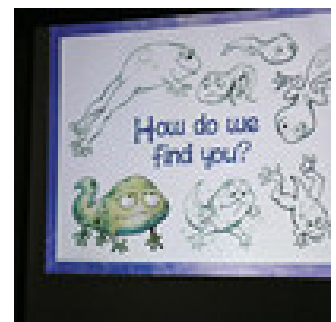
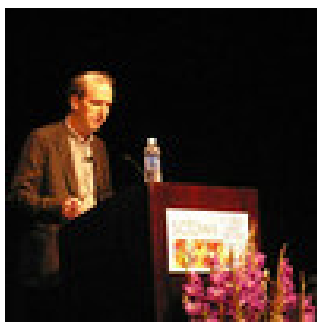
Where else can we learn from the genius of illustrators such as the imaginative David Wiesner, hilarious John Scieszka and Jarrett Krosocza, as well as many others? Where else can we illustrators get our portfolios in front of top agents, leading art directors and publishers? I became hooked on the conferences by

my second year of attendance, when I was “discovered” by my publisher; we have since created three books together, now read by tens of thousands.

At this year’s illustrator intensive, we had the opportunity to see where selected illustrators’ work

(continued next page)

Illustrators are solitary creatures that hole up in our studios, balancing deadlines and practicing our craft, so we often don’t get out much. Then suddenly—in a span of four action packed days, we take part in a shared experience with hundreds of like-minded people. We get a chance to view other visual artists’ portfolios, share our process and concerns—and find out we are not alone. I find that I learn as much from my fellow



1. David Wiesner - keynote illustrator. 2. Rejection letters at Black and White Gala Dance 3. Jen Lum, art director for Learning A-Z explains how illustrating action is vital to story telling. 4. ‘Taddy’ frog character illustrations by Laura Hoffman.



fits into the children’s book market. I never want to miss the intensives – here is a day devoted just to our concerns. I felt like we were getting the “insider’s view” of what editors, art directors and agents really look for in hiring us and where we fit in, and it can be very specific. Still, we were exhorted to break through boundaries and not limit content, and told its “OK to be scary.” One art director, Giuseppe Castellano, gave us this entirely refreshing advice, “Don’t focus on genre... be who you are.” Oh, and they still want us to send out those postcards to remind them we are out there.

This year I came away with far more focus. I must have an “original voice” in my work. Fundamental craft, such as drawing skills, trained use of form and composition, as well as thoughtful choices of color palette are expected from us as narrative artists. We are challenged now to know our market—our target audience—and make pictures for them. And it goes beyond that. In this age of the constant onslaught of stimulation from media, video games and other unceasing distractions,



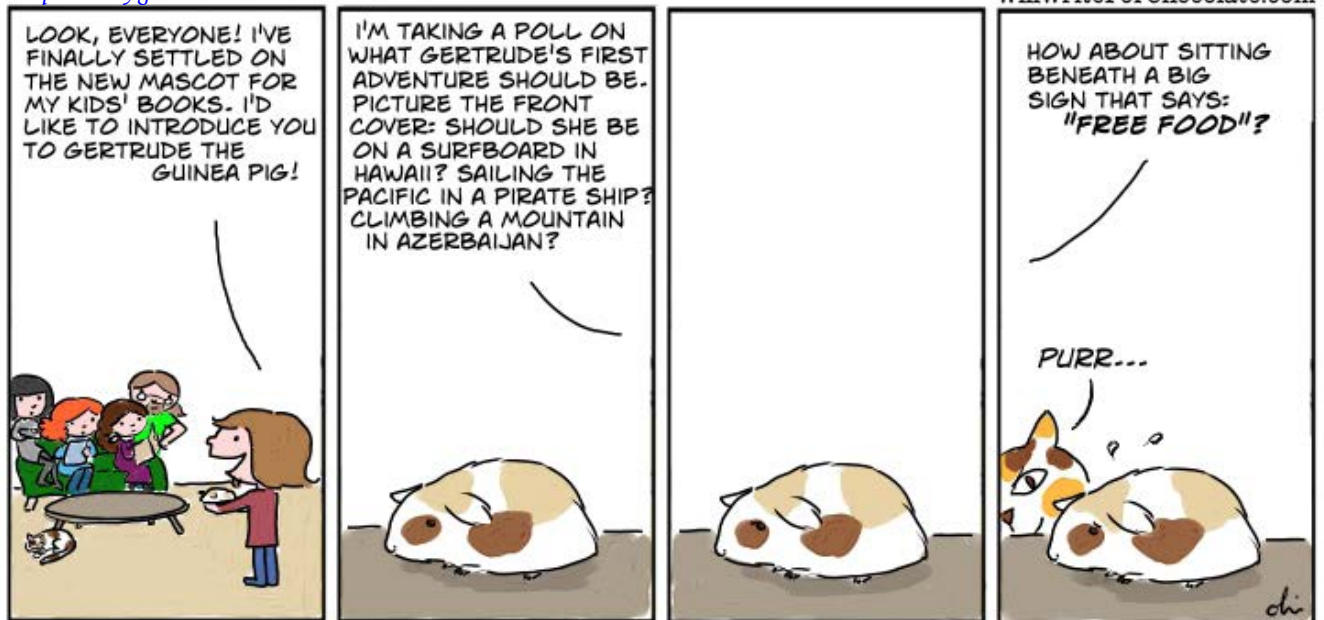
(left) Giuseppe Castello, Kristen Nobles, Allyn Johnston, Steve Malk, Sarah Baker – *Illustrator Intensive First Look Panel.*
(right) Linda Silvestri, Heather Soodak – *Illustrators*

our artwork must grab attention by providing extraordinarily unusual points of view, story telling, unexpected perspective and originality. Illustrators that stand out have a “signature style” that defines us. And humor, emotion and heart go a long way.

Now I’m going to go off and draw.

Laura Hoffman is an illustrator. You can find her on her website <http://www.laurahoffmanart.com> and on her blog: <http://laurahoffmanart.blogspot.com>

<http://inkygirl.com>



Will Write For Chocolate

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Kid Lit at Comic Con

by Beth Navarro



When Grrls Fall in Love panel

I am a fan girl. Let's get that out there on the table. So the idea of going down to Comic Con (for the first time!) to write about kid lit was exciting to say the least. I packed a backpack, threw on my Walking Dead tee-shirt and headed down to the promised land.

After every sense being bombarded by the spectacle that is San Diego Comic Con, I hit up the When Grrls Fall in Love panel. The line-up was stellar: **Ally Condie** (*Matched*), **Veronica Roth** (*Divergent*), **Holly Black** (*The Coldest Girl in Coldtown*), **Marissa Meyer** (*Scarlet*), **Lissa Price** (*Starters*) and **Veronica Wolff** (*The Watchers*). They had a great discussion about their kick ass heroines who still find time for a little romance in their lives. Holly Black said, "The book would be bleak without the romance... finding someone who understand their jagged places." They spoke about how to make their strong characters weak in the knees without making them weak. "She doesn't need to be rescued. He doesn't either. Instead of thinking about gender roles I think of them as equals who sometimes collide," Veronica Roth said. They also spoke about how it is important to have strong female characters in the book surrounding the heroine including a well-rounded antagonist. "We think of them being evil mothers," the wonderful moderator **Sherri Smith** (*Orleans*) mentioned when this came up, "But what they are, are great villains."

I saw a fantastic panel, Apocalyptic/Zombie: It's the End of the World as We Know it, that included

Rick Yancey (*The Monsterumologist*). There was fun "surviving in the apocalypse" talk. The panel was asked why world-ending books seem to be so popular right now. Rick said that books seem to be safe to way to express the fears in our real life.

The final young adult panel I saw was What's Hot in Young Adult Fiction, moderated by author and one of my favorite bloggers, **Nathan Bransford** (*Jacob Wonderbar and the Interstellar Time Warp*). The panel included: **Rachel Cohn** (*Beta*), **Mark Frost** (*The Paladin Prochecy*), **Tahereh Mafi** (*Unravel Me*), **Chelsea Pitcher** (*The SWord*), **Ransom Riggs** (*Miss Peregrine's Home for Peculiar Children*), **Veronica Rossi** (*Through the Ever Night*), **Rainbow Rowell** (*Eleanor and Park*) and **Rachel Hawkins** (*Hex Hall Series*). Bransford posed the question, "Why are adults reading young adult books?" Rachel Cohn answered (and everyone agreed), "Because the books are so good!"

(continued next page)

(right) Rachel Hendricks and Rachel Cohn (below) Mark Frost, Rainbow Rowell, Rachel Hawkins and Rachel Cohn on the What's Hot in Young Adult Fiction panel





Ender's Game exhibit

Mark Frost added, "I don't write for kids. I write for an intelligent person. Reading is where you soul starts to grow." Chelsea Pitcher talked about how she was writing to connect to kids being bullied. She was reacting to the bully epidemic. The teen voice was there in her head. Rachel Hawkins candidly (and hilariously) told us her story about becoming a writer. "It was

"There are many people that won't be successful because they gave up too soon."

Tahereh Mafi

my life raft. It needed to save me and it did." Ransom Riggs talked about world building and said the key was to keep asking yourself questions. They all gave great

advice to aspiring writers. "Be fearless," Mark Frost said. "There are so many reasons not to write. Write what is in your heart. Cultivate it and associate with people who support you. Turn off the noise," Rachel Cohn said. Tahereh Mafi said this, "There are many people that won't be successful because they gave up too soon."

Besides the panels, I found kid lit all over the convention. I met **Steven T. Seagle**, author of a great picture book, *Frankie Stein*. There was an amazing *Ender's Game* walk through exhibit promoting the film that will be out next year. It was a thrill walking through Ender's house and the command station after the reading the book years ago. And that was just the tip of the iceberg, there were plenty of other kid lit booths, signings and panels I didn't see.

What a weekend. I even sort-of dressed up (as a Battlestar Gallactica viper pilot). Who am I?? I got the Comic Con fever. I am so proud of our community's contribution to this amazing culture. This was an amazing experience. I can't wait until next year!



Beth Navarro is Co-editor of *Kite Tales*, a blogger and Children's book author. Please check out her website: www.bethnavarro.com.

Got a New Book Coming Out?

Tell your publisher's publicity person which state awards it's eligible for. Go to the Central Los Angeles Public Library downtown, to the Children's Literature department. Ask the librarian to help you pull up "Awards & Prizes from the Children's Book Council." The Library will maintain the subscription only if it's used. It's the only resource of its kind! To look up each state award individually, you would have to know the name of the award or sponsoring agency.

In Memory of Madeleine Comora

by Caroline Arnold

Madeleine Comora-Bhushan passed away July 3, 2013. She was an accomplished poet and author of children's books plus a gifted painter. Her home was in Glendale, but she also lived in India for several years, where she embraced its rich culture and history. Many of us in Southern California knew her and will miss her.

I first met Madeleine when she was a student in my writing course at UCLA Extension. Her class project was the story of barber surgeons and the history of dentistry, inspired by her father who had been a dentist. We reconnected when I later joined a writers' critique group to which she belonged. By then Madeleine was having some of her poems published and was working on new book projects such as *Rembrandt and Titus*, *George Washington's Teeth*, which she co-wrote with Deborah Chandra, another member of Myra Cohn Livingston's poetry group that Madeleine was part of. Some of Madeleine's other stories and poems included a railroad story, inspired, I believe, by her grandfather, and an imaginative dog story, inspired by her dearly beloved bulldog Eleanor.

Madeleine's writing came from her life, whether on a personal level or from her interest in art and history. The book we did together, *Taj Mahal*,

grew out of a mutual fascination with India and visits to the Taj Mahal, which we both found far more impressive than we expected. The book started out as a strictly nonfiction project focusing on the background and building

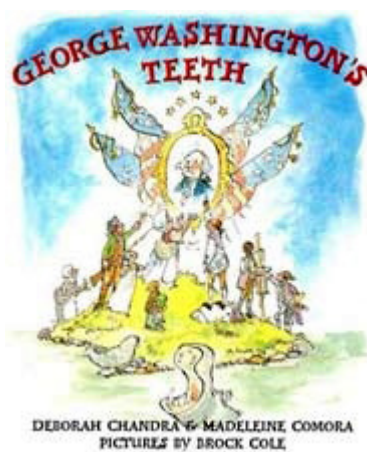


Madeleine's Wedding

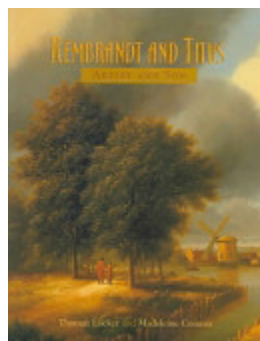
of the Taj Mahal, but evolved into a poetic retelling of the tale that is said to have inspired the building of this great monument. In the beginning, we envisioned the book illustrated with photos and historical art, but, when our editor suggested that Madeleine's husband Rahul, a professional artist, submit some sample art, it became obvious that he was the perfect choice as the illustrator. So, while Madeleine and I labored over the text, making sure that every word and comma was exactly right, Rahul painted the pictures, researching every detail. The final product was a true collaboration. I brought my experience and nonfiction skills, Madeleine was the poet, creating music in every line, and Rahul contributed his beautifully detailed art and his Indian sensibility.

Meanwhile, Madeleine and Rahul became officially engaged and were married in a traditional Hindu ceremony, which I and many of Madeleine's writer friends attended. Madeleine was the most beautiful

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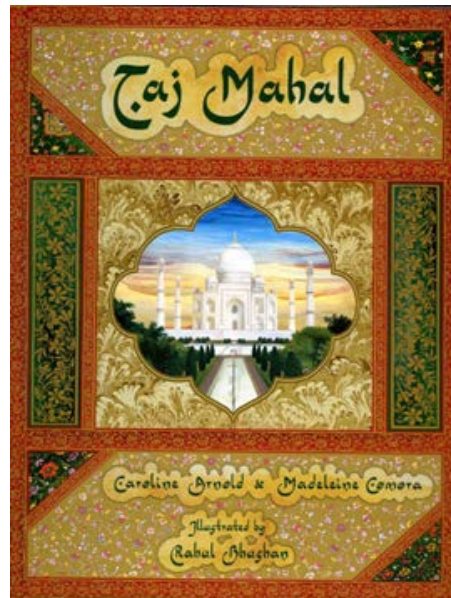


(above) *George Washington's Teeth*
(right) *Rembrandt and Titus*





bride I had ever seen. And then, not too long after, Madeleine became pregnant, her belly expanding each day with twins. I remember going to a baby shower organized by Madeleine's sister Aileen. And then Kavi and Shiva were born, so tiny at first. After they came home, I helped with the feeding and diapering, trying to give Madeleine a break during a time Rahul was away. I remember how calm she seemed and so glowing with the joy of motherhood. I am saddened that Madeleine will not see her boys



Jacket Frontsm

grow up, but she gave them a good start.

I last communicated with Madeleine in late April. She was on her way home from Seattle where she had been getting medical treatments. She said, "I'll call you soon."

Madeleine was a wonderful poet, perceptive critic in our writer's group, loving wife and mother, teacher, and friend. My heart goes out to her husband Rahul, her twin boys, her mother and sisters. She will be terribly missed.

Sue Alexander Grant Winner Announcement

Great story. Fascinating plot. Amazing characters. Right-on pacing. That's all? Yes, that's all it takes to tell a superb story. And that is exactly what **AMANDA HOLLANDER** did in her first prize winning novel *Crumbs*. Each judge said that while this was the best year so far for excellent writing, there was no doubt that *Crumbs* deserved to be the winning manuscript.

Also receiving high praise was Honorable Mentions: *Outcast* by Clare De Liscia Baird, and *Abel* by Beth Navarro.

SCBWI-LA is very proud of its working-writer members.

Winner: AMANDA HOLLANDER for *Crumbs* (middle grade novel)

1st Honorable Mention: CLARE DI LISCIA BAIRD for *Outcast*

2nd Honorable Mention: BETH NAVARRO for *Abel*



Eat Your Vegetables

by Daniel Nayeri

If anyone tells you that the conversation around “diversity” and publishing is simple, then they’re either woefully uneducated on the subject, or they’re operating with a certitude that only exists in minds where other thoughts have no room.

On a monthly basis, I’m lucky enough to be the welterweight editor in a room full of publishing heavies (this is funny to me because physically, I’ve got about 100 pounds on each of them). These are the meetings for the Children’s Book Council Diversity Committee. Last names like Mercado and Pinkney and Lamb and Klein and Ling and Barney and Tripathi don’t even need first names in this industry.

They’re the type of gatekeeper more akin to St. Peter than Cerberus (though many a delinquent author might disagree).

They’re big minds, kind hearts, and each of them has done more for diversity in YA literature than most of us. So I usually stuff my face with a deli sandwich and listen as we struggle with these issues. And believe me, it’s a struggle.

The subjects are sensitive and involve inferences that haven’t much proof to back them. Many are systemic issues with multiple variables. They are difficult to discuss and even harder to resolve.

Here are a few, by way of example:

Should African American authors/books make up 12% of the publishing frontlist, or should that percentage be aligned

with the percentage African Americans take up of the “reading market.”

If gatekeepers are somehow at fault, why are the biggest successes in self-publishing also predominantly written by white middle class writers?

Should the ALA add an award for Asian-Americans, or take away the ones for other minorities?

If marketing and in-house support are the issue, why do houses that focus entirely on multicultural books still have such trouble breaking into the bestseller list?

The point of the list is to give a sampling of questions that members of the CBC Diversity Committee are asked to address. And I suppose my personal point is that most of these are not as straightforward as they may seem. Of course, as a committee we’ve got actual business to take care of.

Planning industry events to introduce book marketers with specialists in other industries, coordinating visits to colleges and high schools in order to recruit diverse students into our field, maintaining our website, and various other projects take up much of our sessions.

So you can see, we don’t get as much time as we would like to discuss everything. For my part, I think the

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**“The subjects are sensitive...
difficult to discuss and even
harder to resolve.”**



reason books with minority characters consistently garner lower acquisitions rates, marketing, and sales, is that most people want their entertainment to be easy and comfortable. We live in the era of books as escapism, books as magic carpets that take us places.

Well, that's a perfectly valid metaphor for books. They often carry us to new worlds. But the authors reading this will probably note, the metaphor is also a passive one. When we want our entertainment to carry us, while we shut off our brains, veg-out, and read for plot, then we implicitly give up our ability to engage with the work, to sit up and grapple with difficult prose, with complex thoughts, with challenging material.

If you agree with me so far--and you certainly don't have to--then you probably see the problem. Comfort reading is the reason the bestseller lists look so homogenous. It's why we have so many sequels and remakes and genre fads. I should quickly mention I have no problems with anyone reading or writing whatever they want. This isn't about scolding people into eating their vegetables. It's simply to say that if you only ever read for one purpose, then you miss out on other purposes for reading. Comfort food has

one particular purpose; a gluten-free vegan meal has another. Sometimes these two will overlap. Often, they won't.

And so, reading outside of your comfort zone is exactly what I hope readers will embrace...if not for the sake of encouraging great works, then for the sake of experiencing cultures, characters, narrative forms, genres and opinions completely alien to our own experience.

That's enough from me. I hope you'll continue grappling with some of these issues with us, and I'd welcome you to enter the conversation. There are never too many voices—not if they're thoughtful and considerate. After all, hearing every voice is the whole point of diversity.



Daniel Nayeri is author of *Straw House, Wood House, Brick House, Blow*. He is also the Digital Editorial Director at Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, *Books for Young Readers*.

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Putting the "OHM" in Promotion

A current discussion about marketing your illustration work

by Nicole Tugeau

I have two—okay, 3, actually—very friendly disclaimers before we get started.

- 1.) Put this article aside if you do not yet have a full body of cohesive illustration work. Go on, avert your eyes now, grab your sketchbook or sit down at your drawing table and get to work. Relax. Work. Please allow your creative self the time and energy to produce the finished art *before* you task yourself with promotion. Give yourself some space.



Artist postcards ready for assembly

- 2.) If you do indeed have a full, consistent portfolio of color art (8-12 fully realized and finished illustrations), but you haven't added anything new in 6-12 months, you, too, should avert your eyes now and go make some new work. Even if you *have* new work that is currently hung up awaiting a pub or release date, trust me, your portfolio needs constant attention. Don't wait. Make something new. Now.
- 3.) As if completing the perfect new piece for self promotion or rounding out (realizing) your portfolio wasn't hard enough, marketing your

work can be overwhelming...if you allow it to be. I encourage you to r-e-l-a-x when it comes to promoting yourself. I repeat, relax. Instead of trying EVERYthing in an effort to be EVERYwhere, give yourself some time to find what works for YOU in the current landscape.

As an agent working in children's publishing, I perceive the promotional work that I'm tasked with on a daily basis as my creative outlet. Yes, I actually consider the marketing work enjoyable. Why? Because these days you don't need big money or months and months of planning to market yourself successfully. And I contend that the preparation and sharing of artwork is less cumbersome than it was ten years ago. Technology, social media, and digital printing have provided us with endless marketing options that respect even the most modest budgets. I find that the lower cost and

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(above) Connecting with the industry personally is priceless



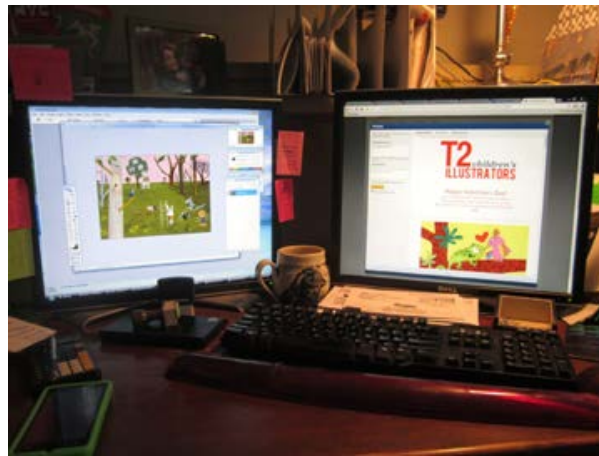
(right) The paper files are becoming obsolete



...ILLUSTRATOR'S PERSPECTIVE

accessibility of advertising allows for more play and lively activity. It still takes good old fashioned TIME to realize your marketing goals, that's for sure, but you can certainly cover a lot more ground with much less fuss.

For comparison's sake, let's step backwards. The year is 2003. I'm a brand new agent and I launch my agency with a decent computer, printer, scanner, website, and twelve very talented and trusting children's illustrators. Seventy-five percent of my seed money – several thousand dollars – goes to my web developer to create a website from the ground up. Remember when websites were so mysterious and expensive?



(above) Creating digital content for an emailed promotion
(left) Example of an emailed promotion

The remaining 25% pays for lawyer's fees, our first industry mailing, and two trips into New York City for prearranged meetings. Into each of those meetings we carried two large portfolios that we painstakingly filled with color-corrected imagery labeled with artist's names. After nearly two years in business, with a little profit to work from, we turned to the industry source books for marketing support. We contributed thousands of dollars to the artist's pages in the *Directory of Illustration*, *Picturebook* and *RSVP* (now defunct). And

we spent literally hundreds of hours on the phone making cold calls and following up on those early mailings and visits. What strikes me now in hindsight is that we were willing to pay for the most expensive marketing because we equated it with success. And there really weren't a lot of options.

Ten years later, the year is 2013, and our marketing costs are stacked much differently. We're successfully growing the agency, engaging in a variety of marketing activities and, overall, spending less. My website, once the most expensive piece of marketing, is now powered by ProSite through Bēhance for less than \$200/year.

There are no maintenance fees because the artists can maintain their portfolios themselves, and I can update the website from any computer in a matter of seconds (literally). For \$360/year, I reach 500 clients a month with my monthly promotional emails through Constant Contact. I spend a good portion of my marketing dollars on printing and postage every year with the goal of getting out one large paper group mailing to the industry each year and at least one additional

postcard directing the industry to visit with our Team online. Cold calls, Linked-In, Facebook and the T2 Blog are free. I have a Twitter account, but I don't use it much...at all. And I'm confident that that's fine! After years of consistent advertising in the industry source books, I stopped in 2011. Dollar for dollar, I simply feel I can do much better and more effective work for myself (for my group) by getting myself in front of the industry in person. So I've spent the most money on travel in recent years. Nothing beats it. It's

(continued next page)



fun, effective, and I no longer have to stay up all night revamping paper portfolios. I can update my iPad quite easily. Don't get me wrong, with a large group of artists it's still a task requiring several hours of work, but it's so much less fussy than two sided tape and the paper cutter!

An individual artist, working with or without a representative, has just as many great options for promotion as any agent or agency. There is no hidden strategy or industry secrets! My suggestion is to maintain a home base; your personal website is a must and a blog if you're so inclined. From there, be realistic and consistent. Reach into social media if it moves you. Share your artwork on Facebook, it's so much a 'visual' space, I think it lends itself well to the work of the art and design community. Perhaps you've cultivated a page of personal work or short narrative on Pinterest that you'd like to share. Drive that 'share' through Facebook or Twitter. Try to send one color, simple, character-driven promotional postcard a year or once every other year (that's fine!). Scale down the number of recipients and send only to the industry folks you've met personally or want to meet personally. Keep it simple and manageable. Emailed promotions: use sparingly. Email is cumbersome for any professional these days. Mass emails from a single artist can be perhaps viewed as too much of an assumption. Ask first. And if you have additional funds to spend, I really



A promotional postcard bundle

encourage you to try and get yourself personally in front of the industry through SCBWI or an illustration group, perhaps a publisher that is in your area and open to meetings.

Anyone who is in business for themselves knows that the work is never done. We could always be doing more, researching further, or trying something new. The current opportunities for promotion are many. Have confidence in your choices. Talk to other illustrators about their experiences. Look ahead. And don't forget to look back every once in a while.

Bio information for her?

Critique Connections Online FREE



Longing for a critique group? Why not join Critique Connections Online? It's open to SCBWI members who reside in the Tri-Regions of Southern California. Critique Connections Online is not an online critique group or a manuscript exchange; it is a way to link up with like-minded people to allow you the possibility of creating your own critique group. Best of all, it's free!

E-mail your request to critiqueconnect@yahoo.com. Questions can be addressed to the same e-mail. Once you've joined the Yahoo! Group, you will be asked to provide information about yourself for a database and for an introductory e-mail. Others in the group can then connect directly with you and you with them.



Toot Your Horn!



Wolf by Valerie Hobbs, Middle grade, Frances Foster, ISBN 978-0-374-31575-7

Nothing Fancy about Kathryn and Charlie

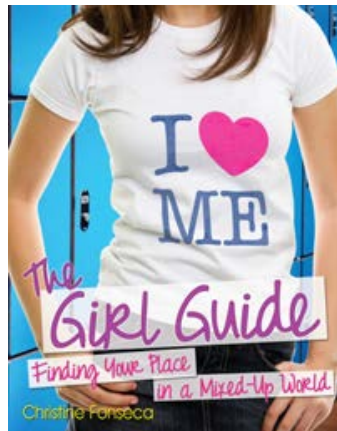
by Kerry Madden-Lunsford and illustrated by her daughter, Lucy Madden-Lunsford, Mockingbird Publishers, picture book

ages 4 and up, ISBN-13: 9780982852804

Letters From a Nut's Family Tree illustrated by Alan Marder, Scholastic, ISBN 978-0-545-48877-8

The Girl Guide

by Christine Fonseca, nonfiction, Prufrock Press, ages 11-14, ISBN 13: 9781618210272



The Wind at Work: An Activity Guide to Windmills

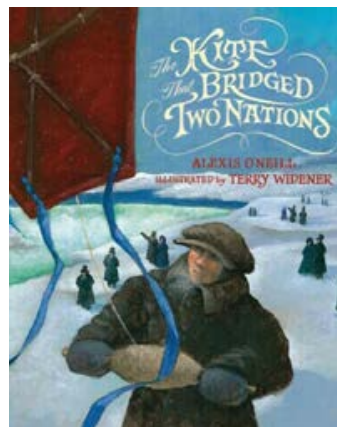
by Gretchen Woelfle, Chicago Review Press, ages 9-14, Nonfiction environmental, ISBN 978-1-61374-100-9

Inside MAD by The Editors of MAD Magazine; co-written by Vicki Arkoff with Judd Apatow, Roseanne Barr, George Lopez, Penn & Teller, more, Illustrated by The Usual Gang of Idiots, Time Home Entertainment, Ages 9 – 99, Humor, ISBN 9781618930897

Poco Loco by J. R. Krause and Maria Chua, Illustrated by J. R. Krause, picture book, Two Lions / Amazon Children's Publishing, Ages 4-8, ISBN-13: 9781477816493



The Kite That Bridged Two



Nations: Homan Walsh and the First Niagara Suspension Bridge

by Alexis O'Neill, Illustrated by Terry Widener, Calkins Creek, ages 8-11, Historical fiction, picture book, ISBN #: 978-1-59078-938-4

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For the benefit of booksellers and librarians, *Kite Tales*, twice per year, lists new books written or illustrated by members. Send us: ISBN#; Title by author, illustrator; Ages ? and up; Genre and publisher; Author or book website. Is author SCBWI member? Is illustrator SCBWI member?

Sorry, no self-published, print-on-demand or subsidy/vanity press books.

E-mail Beth Navarro at: kitetaleseditor@gmail.com

The next Toot Your Horn will appear in the Spring Issue.

Next Deadline: January 15, 2014



Take, Take, Take

CHARLIE COHEN

The disturbing thing about being featured in Kite Tales’ volunteer spotlight is the notion that I’m some sort of volunteer. Volunteers are pasty-skinned, gluten-free, do-gooders, in love with their fellow man and sincerely interested in helping their communities. While it is true that my mid-life-crisis-low-carb-diet has cut down on my gluten intake, I’ve never much trusted my fellow man and, since the days of being picked last for the team, am frankly terrified of them when they form a community. I mean, they’re why I became a writer. So it would seem out of character for me to even join SCBWI, let alone volunteer there. Until you realize that it was all about self-interest.

I had no intention of actually joining this silly little writers’ clique; just attending enough of their schmoozes to suck them dry of information.

Sometime in the middle of my screenwriting career I had the epiphany that I could no longer work for people who said things like “We absolutely want to stay true to the character, only in our version, Curious George doesn’t get into trouble.” So I decided to write a middle grade novel. Of course, I had no idea what “middle grade” was, nor how to sell such a thing. Nor, thankfully, what middle-grade-novel-writing paid.

Then I found SCBWI—an entire organization designed to answer my questions! Of course, I had no intention of actually joining this silly little writers’ clique; just attending enough of their schmoozes to suck them dry of information.

But they had SOOOO much information. It took me years to bleed dry the brilliant Westside co-coordinators Greg Pincus and Sara Wilson Etienne, and their equally brilliant successors, Lee Wind and Rita Crayon Huang. By then I’d also managed to fool some

fellow schmoozers into forming a critique group and giving me free notes, won an award at Writer’s Day and, through the SCBWI list-serve, found an agent for my novel, “A PRETTY GOOD BOOK (If You Like Books With Depressed Heroes, Alternate Universes, Useless Adults And Run-On Sentences That Seem To Go Round And Round In Circles Forever And Ever Like They’re Never Ever Going To Get Anywhere

But, If You Stick With Them Long Enough, You Find That, Generally, They Do).” SCBWI was pure gravy.

That is, until Rita and Lee asked Karol Silverstein and I if we wanted to succeed them as co-coordinators. Karol was perfect: dark, funny, and smart, but—co-

leading the schmooze? I couldn’t see how that fit into my credo of self-interest.

Boy, was I wrong. Co-leading a schmooze is great! You get to explore your own areas of interest (last year we schmoozed on graphic novels and sex in YA), get your business questions answered (our niche marketing schmooze changed my world), and justify spending hours learning. Also, the act of co-leading the schmooze gave me the confidence to pursue my day job



as a writing coach (www.charliethewritingcoach.com). Far from being selfless, volunteering has turned out to be the ultimate form of self-interest. So I’ll keep doing it. As long as they’ll have me, I’m gonna take, take and take!



Tackling Social Media After a Conference

by Greg Pincus

There's nothing like an SCBWI conference - meeting people who share your love of children's literature, learning what's new in our industry, networking, and talking craft until the sun goes down...or comes up. It can be mighty sad to go home at the end of the day or weekend but with some attention paid to social media, you don't have to let the good times end - because social media offers a fantastic opportunity to continue to build relationships, establish friendships, show off your work, and much more.

Once you're home from a conference, it's the perfect chance to connect online with the folks you met in the flesh. Yes, you can do some of this at the event itself, but it's important to give yourself time to decide who you want to stay in touch with and where you want to connect with them. It often makes more sense to do this afterwards as you go over the business cards and scrawled notes you've come home with.

Since not every social network is the same, it helps to think about your goals before you reach out. Perhaps you want to show off your illustrating skills, or build an audience for your writing work, or simply stay in touch with people. Any of those is viable with social media, but knowing what you want will help you connect in ways that will help you reach your goals.

For example, LinkedIn has a real business focus. While there's an active SCBWI group there, in general you won't find folks hanging out talking craft tips all day. At the same time, by being on LinkedIn, you might find work as a freelance writer or illustrator or discover that someone you know well knows a person you'd

love to chat with. The truth is, you can find a way to use LinkedIn (or any network) for any purpose, but by thinking things through first, you up your chances of spending your time online effectively.

It also helps to look at how the people you're hoping to connect with use the different networks. For instance, many agents, editors and creative types talk business on Twitter but keep Facebook purely social. Since all relationships on Twitter start in one direction - you "follow" someone, and they needn't follow you back - it's an easy place to make a first contact

and establish a connection that begins business based. But, using the above example, if you feel comfortable asking for that more personal connection, reaching out on Facebook would be fine, too. In all cases, it's a matter of respecting how each person uses each network.

Most importantly, connecting with folks online is about you finding your comfort level. Whether you love to blog or not...whether you focus on Pinterest or Facebook...whether you just want to listen or want to be heard... here are ways to connect that can make you feel like you have an SCBWI conference going on

whenever you want. And really, is there anything wrong with that?

Greg Pincus is poet, author, screenwriter, and blogger. His first novel, The 14 Fibs of Gregory K., arrives in October from Arthur A. Levine Books.



In all cases, it's a matter of respecting how each person uses each network.

Westside Illustrators Schmooze in Santa Monica

by Suzy Engelman Block

Self-Portrait by Suzy Engelman Block



What is a Schmooze?

A Schmooze is a gathering where children's writers and illustrators share knowledge, great news, and companionship. They are free activities offered by the SCBWI-Los Angeles Region.

I"It's never too late to be what you might have been", said George Eliot.

That's what I was thinking when I stepped into coordinator Joan Charles' Westside Illustrators Schmooze in 2003. I instantly felt the power of being surrounded by like-minded people... people who also had that strange obsession with telling stories and savored the sweet smell of art supplies!

I have begun my 6th year as coordinator of this schmooze and am always amazed that there is still more to discuss and explore. My schmoozers have become my teammates, my partners-in-crime and my very dear friends.

WHO ARE WE? We come from many different walks of life and various degrees of accomplishment in the writing and art world. A few are absolute novices looking for a reason to take that first step. Yet many are 'emerging' writers and artists, with paying gigs and first books! Some are very well established and published with 40 books under their belts.

WHY ARE WE HERE? Peer encouragement and sharing is key in the success of our schmooze. We share a very personal quest, to manifest that passion deep within us by making a contribution to the world of children's illustration and literature. It's amazing what can happen when people decide to move forward in a common pursuit. Schmoozing includes that tangible human connection that sparks momentum. It is truly magical!

WHAT HAPPENS AT A SCHMOOZE? We discuss challenging monthly topics covering every aspect of our creative venture. We explore practicalities regarding dummies, portfolios, submissions, agents and promotion. We also address the artist's emotional journey and creative battles. We implement recurring themes that we can incorporate into our daily routine. "A Doodle

(continued next page)





a Day” can free us from a slump that has engulfed our creative process. “Dream Big, Start Small” keeps us mindful that baby steps are the key to moving forward in life. Accountability to the group can be very ‘energizing’! At evening’s end, we are inspired to begin anew, continue and complete our personal projects.

WHEN AND WHERE DO WE MEET? We meet once a month in Santa Monica at the warm private home of gracious schmoozer Paula Mayerson.

Recently, I posed a question to the group. “What does ‘schmoozing’ mean to you?” Here’s a sampling of their responses....

This schmooze is the best place for an insecure beginner to land: it comes ready with the best caring den mother, and all the supportive fellow-illuminators you need. Terry Lym Diefenbach

...What I didn’t expect was all the lovely friendships I’ve made and the inspiration that comes from watching other illustrators work hard and succeed. Tanya Maiboroda

...some of the smartest and nicest and most generous people I have ever known. I’m so happy to have found my tribe! Laurie Young

I was in this group from its very beginning...I became a published illustrator since and the book I illustrated won a Moon-Beam award! Irina Mirskaya

The generosity of published people showing their first steps, roughs, dummies and final product helps demystify the whole process and makes it less intimidating. Maria Johnson

We get together to discuss the field, pose questions, and show and circulate work. Teresa Lakier

We learn, we grow, we laugh, inspired and ultimately embraced for the courage it takes just to show up. Carol Green

It truly is something that has helped me feel less alone in the pursuit of a career in illustration. Jessica Chrysler

Goethe said, “At the moment of commitment the world conspires to assist you”.

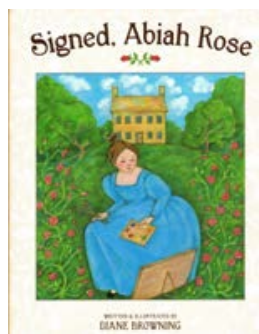
It’s true. So, take the baby step that is tickling your tootsies. Enter the door of a schmooze and discover what your dreams are made of...!

Interested in joining us? Email me at SuzyBlock@gmail.com for more information.

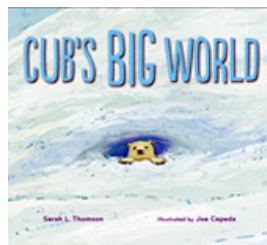
Notable Work from the Westside Illustrators Schmooze in Santa Monica



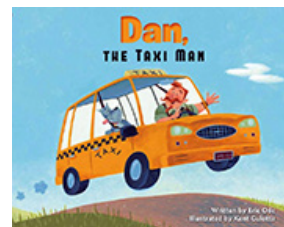
Schmoozer
Tanya Maiboroda



Schmoozer
Diane Browning



Schmoozer
Joe Cepeda



Schmoozer
Kent Culotta



Schmoozer
Kat McDonough

Wilson Swain: What's my Motivation?



I sometimes find I'm scratching my head over the next career move. As an illustrator, I have to work to keep goals in forward momentum. Here's what has helped me:

Get a whiteboard. Write down the day's goals and erase them as each task is completed. I accomplish so much more when what I hope to achieve is clear.

Read books you wouldn't normally grab. I've learned as much from unappealing books as I have from good ones. Discover why editors get frustrated and/or fall in love by pulling books at random off of a library shelf.

99 in 99. I have challenged myself to complete 99 digital paintings in 99 days. It was rough at first because my skills needed refining, but after three months I'd developed a way of working digitally.

Volunteering. I've been involved with a local creative writing center for kids. The field trips, where kids come together to write a story as a group, has been a fun way to infiltrate and observe.

Take advantage of where you live. LA has amazing talent pools of visual storytellers. Take a class, visit a gallery or attend a screening. Come early and stay late to meet people.

Get a buddy or two. Report on your whiteboard success weekly by checking in with a friend. Peer pressure is a fantastic motivator. The more the merrier.

Wilson Swain grew up in the Midwest, inspired by pop culture, trains and quirky cartoon characters. His books include the pop up adventure, *Castaway Pirates* by Ray Marshall, *A Nutty Nutcracker Christmas* by Ralph Covert & G. Riley Mills and *The Castle of Shadows* by Ellen Renner. He has won several portfolio awards through SCBWI events and he has been a proud member of the planning committee for Los Angeles' *Illustrator's Day* in 2011 and 2012.

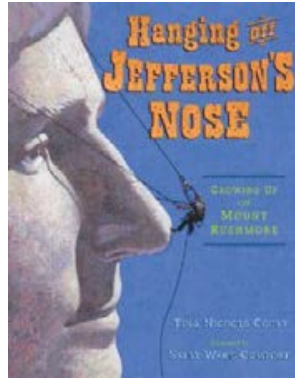




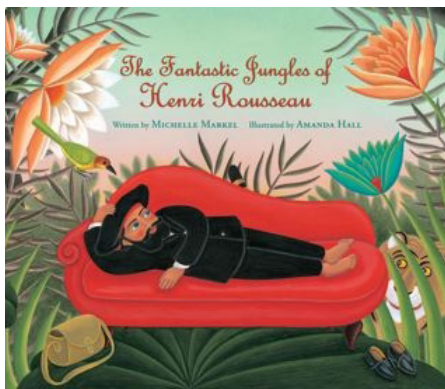
Bulletin Board

Great News

Hanging Off Jefferson's Nose: Growing Up On Mount Rushmore by **Tina Nichols Coury** and Illustrated by Sally Wern Comport, (Dial Books for Young Readers. May 2012) was named one of the Best children's books for 2013, by the National Council for Social Studies.



The University of Alabama Birmingham has given **Kerry Madden-Lunsford** a creative grant of \$3000.00 to tour rural Alabama libraries with her children's book *Nothing Fancy About Charlie and Kathryn*, a book which tells the story of a friendship between Alabama storyteller, Kathryn Tucker Windham, and Alabama folk artist, Charlie Lucas. She will visiting rural libraries across the state with her illustrator daughter, Lucy Madden-Lunsford, to offer writing and art workshops to children in June 2013.



The Fantastic Jungles of Henri Rousseau by **Michelle Markel** (Illustrated by Amanda Hall, Eerdmans) has won a Parents' Choice

Gold Award for picture books, and is a Bank Street College Best Children's Book of 2013. It has also been shortlisted for the 2013 PEN Literary Awards,

specifically the PEN/Steven Kroll Award for Picture Book Writing.

For her new book, *The Kite That Bridged Two Nations*, **Alexis O'Neill** is working with the Oakwood Cemetery, where the subject of her book is buried, and the Niagara Falls Musuems to launch her book internationally in Niagara Falls New York and Ontario on the weekend of September 27-29. Local kite clubs will supervise family kite-making activities. For more information, contact Alexis at AlexisInCA@aol.com



Ice Island (Random House) by **Sherry Shahan** is on the Bank Street College of Ed. "Best of Books, 2013" list for ages 9- 12 in the adventure category. The story features young teens and their sled dogs. Woven into the story is info about the 1925 Serum Run.

Classes

ILLUSTRATING CHILDREN'S BOOKS

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Instructor: Deborah Nourse Lattimore

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1/4 page: 3.5"w x 3.75"h = \$60

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Make checks payable to: SCBWI-L.A.

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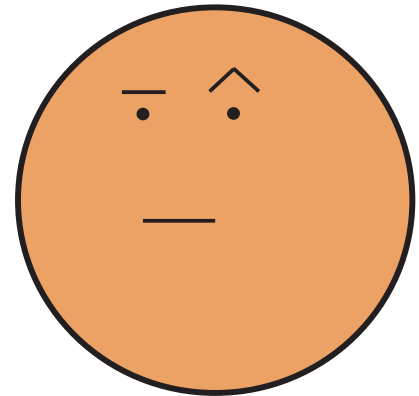
Writing Connections

Writing Connections Disclaimer: KITE TALES accepts members' ads for writing and illustrating businesses and activities. An ad in KITE TALES does not imply endorsement by SCBWI, and members are reminded to request additional information from advertisers. We retain the right to refuse and to suspend ads.



Definitions for the Perplexed

by Editorial Anonymou— *A Blog of a Children's Book Editor*
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Assistant- Associate- Senior- Executive- Editor -in Chief-ial Director etc etc

Could you explain exactly what an Editorial Director does? Where does she fit in with the general hierarchy of a publishing company? (I assume she is more senior than a Senior Editor, but is there anyone more senior than her?) Does an Editorial Director have to go through a committee to acquire, just like everyone else, or is she more autonomous? Ha-ha! I will never tell. The industry is conspiring against you to make this information inaccessible!

Ok, I don't mean that. But I can't tell you the answer, because what an editorial director does, how she fits in the hierarchy of the company, and how she acquires will vary unpredictably from one house to another.

So if I told you what "editorial director" means at my house, my colleagues might be able to figure out which house I work for. Every company uses titles to suit their specific needs and interprets titles according to bureaucratic whim. There's no communal chart for what a particular title means in publishing.

Perhaps some of my publishing readers could give anonymous examples in the comments of what "editorial director" means at their houses.

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Next issue:
Self-Publishing
<http://editorialanonymou.blogspot.com/search/label/publishing%20dictionary>

From Editorial Anonymou: "If you have questions, e-mail them to editorialanonymou@hotmail.com, and I'll try to answer them. But seriously, don't try to query me or submit to me. I'm anonymous. If you submit to me or query me at this e-mail address, I will use your letter/submission on the blog. Be warned."



Writing Connections

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is devoted to helping writers make their work the best it can be.

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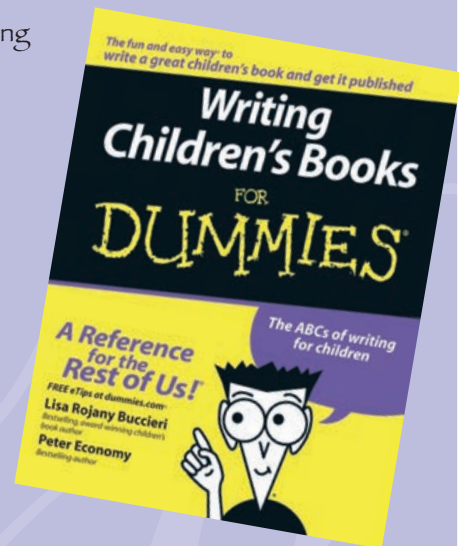
has been in business for over 20 years, and has helped many writers—of both children's and grown-up books—get published or improve their chances for publication.

ESOLA offers personalized, detailed services, everything from line editing to ghostwriting:

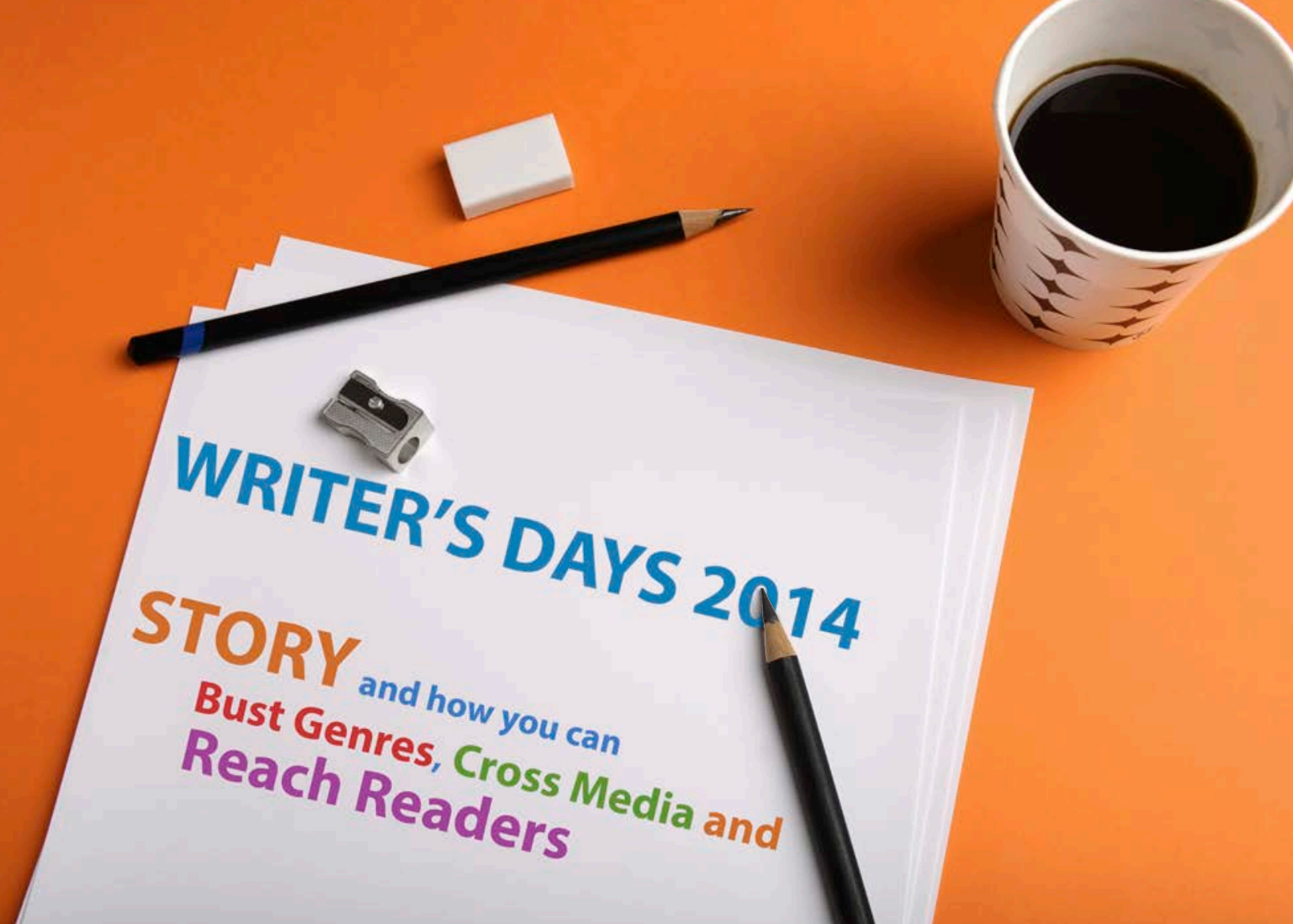
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ESOLA can also help you craft a great query letter—so include it if you want help with that as well!

LISA ROJANY BUCCIERI
EDITORIAL SERVICES OF LOS ANGELES
Email: EditorialServicesofLA@gmail.com
www.editorialservicesofLA.com



Lisa Rojany Buccieri is a publishing executive with over 20 years' experience in the industry. Lisa has also written over 100 children's books. She was lead author on *Writing Children's Books for Dummies* (Wiley, 2005), and co-wrote the *New York Times* bestseller, *Fund Your Future* (Berkley, 2002) with Julie Stav. Lisa's latest comes this October: *Surviving the Angel of Death: The Story of a Mengele Twin at Auschwitz*, with Eva Kor (Tanglewood Books). Her books have received various accolades, such as reaching #1 on the Publishers Weekly Bestseller List two years in a row (*Make Your Own Valentines*, PSS/Putnam), and winning the American Bookseller's Pick of the List (*Giant Animal Fold-Outs: Kangaroo & Company*, PSS/Putnam). Most recently, she spearheaded the Intervisual Books launch of their first grown-up publishing program for Spring 2007. She was the founding V.P. & Publisher of Americhip Books, a children's book packaging company focusing on adapting technologies such as light, sound, paper-engineering, and animation for books. Lisa has also been Editorial/Publishing Director for Golden Books, PSS/Penguin Group, Intervisual Books, Gateway Learning Corp (Hooked on Phonics), and others. She charges by the hour for her editorial services, depending on the length of the manuscript or project. References available upon request.



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