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CHILDREN'S
BOOK GUILD
of WASHINGTON, DC

Monthly News

Authors • Illustrators • Children's Literature Specialists

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Wednesday, August 26, 2020

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Monthly News

The Children's Book Guild of Washington, DC is a professional organization of authors, illustrators and children's literature specialists promoting high standards in children's literature since 1945. Visit us at <https://childrensbookguild.org/>

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September 2020

RAÚL THE THIRD BRINGS A MEXICAN-AMERICAN SENSIBILITY TO CHILDREN'S BOOKS



The Children's Book Guild's first program of 2020-2021 will be held online via Zoom, on September 17 at 7 p.m. At that time, illustrator and author Raúl the Third will discuss his art in a conversation moderated by Guild member Yukari Matsumaya.

Raúl the Third (aka Raúl González) is the Pura Belpré Medal-winning illustrator of the dynamic graphic novel *Lowriders to the Center of the Earth*, as well as the other graphic novels in the series, *Lowriders in Space* and *Lowriders Blast from the Past*. He received a 2020 Pura Belpré Illustrator Honor Award for *Vamos! Let's Go to the Market* and is the author and illustrator of

Vamos! Let's Go Eat, both titles in Guild member Kwame Alexander's Versify imprint at HMH. Raúl lives with his wife, Elaine, and son, Raúl the Fourth, in Medford, MA.

Yukari Matsuyama is the cataloging manager for First Book. She serves on the Children's Book Guild Advisory on Diversity, Equity & Inclusivity and was a member of the 2019-2020 Program Committee.

There is no cost to attend this virtual meeting, but registration is required. Those who register will receive an email with details on how to join the Zoom program. The Guild will provide the option each month to make a donation to an organization that is working for racial justice in children's literacy and education. September's



chosen organization is We Need Diverse Books. For more information on WNDB, please visit: diversebooks.org

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WELCOME MESSAGE FROM KAREN DEANS, GUILD PRESIDENT



Hello, Guild members. I hope everyone has had a healthy summer and is looking forward to a productive, enriching fall. Times have been stressful and disheartening on many fronts, and sometimes it can feel overwhelming. I have taken great solace in community, family and friendship--even from a distance. A friendly nod to someone from behind a mask while standing in line at the grocery store can be an opportunity for connection. Whatever it takes to remember we are all in this together.

This Guild year promises to provide opportunities for connection with members, friends and the larger children's literature community. The

Program Committee has been hard at work planning for the Speaker Series, which will be held online via the Zoom platform. Our first meeting will feature author/illustrator Raúl the Third in conversation with Guild member Yukari Matsuyama, on September 17 at 7 p.m. You should be receiving an invitation to register for that event in the next few days.

Meanwhile, warm wishes to everyone, and I look forward to "seeing" you all soon.

Karen

JUNE'S VIRTUAL MEETING: BOOKS AND LITERACY DURING THE PANDEMIC

by Abby McGanney Nolan

The Children's Book Guild held its final meeting of the 2019-2020 year on the night of June 18. The Guild's third virtual meeting featured seven speakers reflecting on their work in children's literature and literacy during the previous several months, when the pandemic and the fight for racial justice (following the murder of George Floyd) had changed everyone's usual routine.

Guild president **Jean Diehl** opened the meeting and thanked **Terry Jennings** for hosting. **Yukari Matsuyama**, the cataloging manager at First Book and co-chair of the Guild's diversity committee, who has been putting together a list of organizations and actions to support racial justice, welcomed any further suggestions and said she would be distributing the document the following week.

Kathy Crutcher, executive director of Shout Mouse Press, spoke about how the nonprofit writing and publishing program she founded for underheard voices has adapted to COVID-19. Most Shout Mouse authors worked full- or part-time in service industries before the pandemic hit but have been excluded from unemployment benefits and CARES Act funds. In turn Kathy and her team have launched #ShoutInPlace, a weekly writing-prompt series that pays for each response. Whether the collected pieces will ultimately become a book is not yet clear, but Kathy has been impressed by the range of creative responses, 211 as of our meeting. Shout Mouse is also working on book gift packs, online resources and virtual writing workshops. The collaborative novel titled *Black Boys Dreaming* is going forward as a virtual collaboration; the goal is to publish it next year.

Up next were Magination Press's marketing director **Jason Wells** and editorial director **Kristine Enderle**. They have been working hard to promote a slate of books that address pressing issues of identity, power and grief during this unsettled time. For example, *Something Happened in Our Town*, which offers differing perspectives on a police shooting, was published in April 2018 but has recently been featured in such publications as the *New York Times* and *Vanity Fair*. Ederle and Wells are also getting the word out on 2020 books, including *My Maddy*; *Lulu, the One and Only*; *Accordionly*; *Papa, Daddy and Riley*; *Remembering Ethan*; *Ani's Light* and *You'll Find Me*. Magination Press also quickly put together timely resources for children that are available online and were vetted by psychologists: *A Kid's Guide to Coronavirus* and *Unstuck: 10 Things to Do to Stay Safe and Sane During the Pandemic*.

Lacey Dunham of PEN/Faulkner Foundation's Writers in Schools Program talked about how the pandemic reshaped the ways the organization provides educational programming. Maintaining the safety and privacy of students has been a priority, but this has been a time for experimentation, to see what works to engage them. The current focus is on virtual summer camps for three different age groups: teens, middle schoolers and kids ages 7 to 11. These camps are free to DC public-school and charter-school students, and the program is considering expanding beyond Washington, DC. Lacey emphasized that come fall, PEN/Faulkner would work to support students as well as educators.

Erica Perl was the first of four authors and illustrators to speak. She mentioned attending a memorial in early March that was cozy, communal and cathartic, noting that the contrast with what the lockdown imposed was stark. Trying to deal with the grief she was feeling—as well as the book deadline she was facing, Erica embarked on Morning Pages, a ritual she had heard about but had not tried before. Introduced by Julia Cameron in *The Artist's Way*, Morning Pages encourages writing three pages longhand every morning. By day 15, Erica had found a new respect for what was showing up in these pages, in words and pictures—messy to be sure but true to the moment and herself, rather than overly concerned with the audience.

When she works the late shift at the library, **Joy Jones** gets on the loudspeaker to announce that the library is closing—in 30 minutes, 15 minutes, 10 minutes and 5 minutes. The shutdown has been a powerful reminder for her, as an author, that we all have a finite amount of time to do our work. Colleagues at the DC Public Library have asked Joy if she has

used the library system's months-long closure to write a book, and in fact the pandemic gave her the time and urgency to write the picture book she had thought about for a while. Joy also shared the titles of some books she has found useful in thinking about the Black Lives Matter movement and teaching for change: *Rosa Parks: My Story*; *Trailblazer*, by Dorothy Butler Gilliam; *Beyond Heroes and Holidays*; and *Putting the Movement Back into Civil Rights Teaching*. Joy also mentioned that her next book, *Jayla Jumps In*, due in the fall, ties in with her longtime interest in double Dutch. Fifteen years ago, she started a double Dutch team for adults called the Retro Jumpers, and she encouraged Guild members to give double Dutch a try.

Author-illustrator **Lulu Delacre** started with a list of words—including fear, isolation, grief, reaching out, incertitude, making videos, mentoring, adapting, gardening, murder, protest, questioning, research, reading, acknowledging—that signal the tumult of the past few months. She was looking forward to the August release of *Luci Soars*, which is about a girl who is born without a shadow but makes that lack into a strength. Lulu says she has found respite and peace in researching her next project, *Cool Green*. Part of that has meant corresponding with botanists at the Smithsonian; publication will be on Arbor Day 2022. Lulu has also been working on a new companion collection to *US in Progress* and has been mentoring a young artist, with plans for a garden gallery sometime soon.

Illustrator **Rashin Kheiriyeh** gave the group a sense of what she has been working on and thinking about this spring. *Story Boat*, about a refugee girl who is looking for a safe place, was published before the pandemic, in February. Born in 1979 in Iran, Rashin said she saw herself in the main character because her family had to leave Iran when she was a baby. She has finished work on *The Lucky*, which concerns an Iranian girl who becomes a fortune-teller. Two other projects are still in progress: *Gwendolyn's Pet Garden* and *Welcome Home*. Inspired by the Black Lives Matter protests, Rashin said she wants to address social issues and the importance of kindness in her future work.

At the end of the meeting, Jean Diehl handed over the Guild presidential duties to **Karen Deans**, having already given her the presidential chicken in a socially distant manner. Karen said she looked forward to supporting the mission of the Guild to grow and change alongside the larger society.

MEMBER NOMINATION: ZARA GONZÁLEZ HOANG



The Membership Committee is pleased to introduce Zara González Hoang, a candidate for membership in the Guild. As part of the new online application process, Zara has prepared a brief bio:

Zara González Hoang is an illustrator and author originally from Minneapolis. Northern Virginia was never a place where she intended to live, but the whims of fate (and jobs) sent her ping-ponging about the country, and this is where she landed. She's held a number of non-literary jobs--graphic designer, web

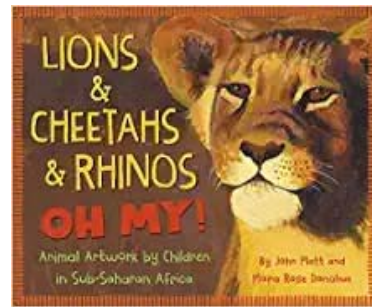
designer, app developer, licensing artist--but stories have always been the most important part of her life.

She was born to a family of storytellers who could make whole worlds come alive with a handful of words and gestures. Countless hours were spent in front of the fire listening intently to the magical tales her parents and their friends told about New York, Puerto Rico and all the places in between. These stories wove themselves into Zara's soul, and now she can't be happy doing anything other than creating stories of her own.

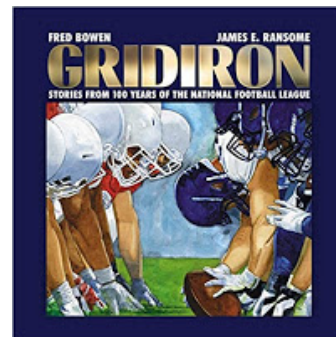
Zara hopes to join the Children's Book Guild so she can surround herself with other storytellers and bask in the collective knowledge of so many people involved in creating, distributing and promoting children's literature.

Her author-illustrator debut, *A New Kind of Wild*, came out this year from Dial Books. She also illustrated *Thread of Love*, by Surishtha and Kabir Sehgal (Beach Lane Books/Simon & Schuster, October 2018) and is currently finishing illustrations for *Mi Casa Is My Home*, by Laurene Sala (Candlewick Press, fall 2021).

MEMBER NEWS



MOIRA ROSE DONOHUE is pleased to report the August 15 release of *Lions & Cheetahs & Rhinos, Oh My!* from Sleeping Bear Press. Moira coauthored the book with artist John Platt. It is illustrated by Sub-Saharan African children in Platt's art program, "How to Draw a Lion."



Gridiron, by FRED BOWEN and illustrated by James E. Ransome and released by Margaret K. McElderry Books in July, is a Junior Library Guild selection. Also, on August 3 Fred was the featured guest on the "Kojo for Kids" segment of the *Kojo Nnamdi Show* on WAMU.



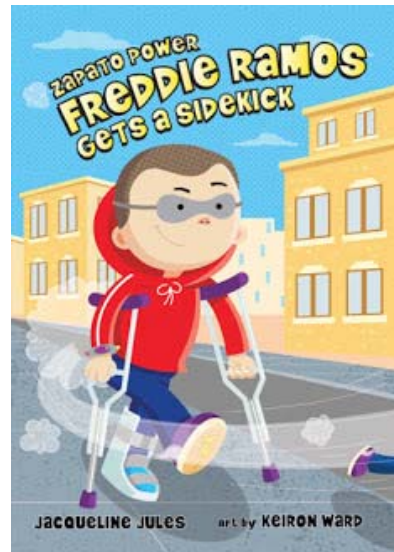
TERRY CATASÚS JENNINGS is pleased to announce that the first book in the four-book *Definitely Dominguita* series, *Knight of the Cape*, is coming out in March from Alladin. Dominguita is a Cuban-American girl who wants to do nothing but read. She has all the friends she needs in the books she and her *abuela* used to read before bedtime. Now, reading helps Dominguita feel that Abuela is still with her. When the class bully calls her out for reading *Don Quijote*, Dominguita tells him she is studying to be a knight. When the bully asserts that girls can't be knights, Dominguita decides to prove him wrong. With a set of new real-live friends, Dominguita has knightly adventures including an epic battle with a windmill.



ERICA PERL's picture book *The Ninth Night of Hanukkah*, illustrated by Shahar Kober, will be published by Sterling on September 15, 2020. It is also a PJ Library selection. In the book, siblings Max and Rachel celebrate an extra night of Hanukkah to thank the neighbors who helped their family settle into their new apartment. *The Ninth Night of Hanukkah* is a celebration of helpers and helping, so Erica hopes it will inspire readers to notice the helpers around them... and to be helpers themselves.

And a piece by Erica about writing during the pandemic (a written version of her remarks at the June Guild meeting; see Abby Nolan's summary, above) will be published in an upcoming issue of the *SCBWI Bulletin*. Erica says, "I'm grateful to have this opportunity to connect with other writers around the joys and frustrations of pursuing our craft during this difficult

time."



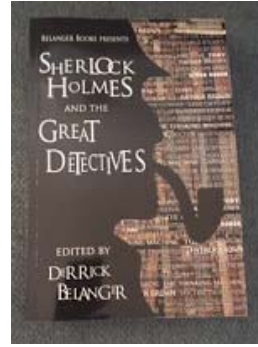
JACQUELINE JULES is excited to announce the publication of the 10th book in the award-winning Zapato Power series. In *Freddie Ramos Gets a Sidekick* (Albert Whitman and Co.), Freddie works on his first invention! But he gets frustrated when it doesn't work on the first try. And something is making holes in the doors around Starwood Park. Freddie's trying to find the culprit, but when he gets injured and can't use his Zapato Power, who will look after Starwood Park? The book is illustrated by Keiron Ward and scheduled to be released on September 1, 2020.



Stories by BRENDA SEABROOKE, as written by Dr. Watson, appear in three recent anthologies from MX Publishing. Two of the stories involve Chevalier Auguste Dupin, the first detective, a character from tales by Edgar Allan Poe, but Dupin is much older in Brenda's accounts. Holmes and Watson look out for him as he helps with their cases and are sometimes surprised by him.

Proceeds from the MX anthologies go for the upkeep of one of Sir Arthur

Conan Doyle's former homes, which now houses a school for children with special needs.



LULU DELACRE is glad that Philomal released her new picture book, *Luci Soars*, on time, on August 4. The book itself is about learning how to change the way we look at things. In keeping with its message, Lulu views the challenge of promoting the book in these uncertain times as an opportunity to create new partnerships so that the book reaches its audience. Learn more about the book's origin in this [video](#).

This fall everyone can join Lulu to celebrate Hispanic Heritage month! You may choose from the virtual event on **September 21**, hosted by Frederick County Libraries, or the event on **September 28**, hosted by Enoch Pratt Free Library. Says Lulu, ¡Celebra conmigo!

Virtual Programs at Politics and Prose

During the pandemic, Politics and Prose continues to host free events for children and adults--virtually. These can be viewed live, in real time, or afterward, as recordings. You can view P&P's events calendar and register for events (advance registration is required to receive link) at <https://www.politics-prose.com/events>.

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