

# Children's Book Guild News



CHILDREN'S  
BOOK GUILD  
of WASHINGTON, DC

## Monthly News

Authors • Illustrators • Children's Literature Specialists

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Sunday, May 30, 2021

### Pages

[Home](#)

[Guild Member Blogs](#)

[Busboys and Poets](#)

### About Me



#### 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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## June 2021

### AUTHORS ANNE BOYD RIOUX AND HENA KHAN: A CONVERSATION ABOUT *LITTLE WOMEN*

More than 150 years after its publication, Louisa May Alcott's best-known novel continues to find a devoted audience. At 1 p.m. on Thursday, June 17, in the final program of the Children's Book Guild's Zoom Speaker Series before the Guild breaks for summer, authors Anne Boyd Rioux and Hena Khan will talk about *Little Women* and what it means to today's readers.



Anne Boyd Rioux is a writer and expert on American women writers. The recipient of four NEH awards, two for public scholarship, she has a Ph.D. in American Studies and has been a professor for more than 20 years. She has published seven books, the latest of which is *Meg, Jo, Beth, Amy: The Story of Little Women and Why It Still Matters* (Norton 2018), an Indie

bestseller and one of the best books of the year, according to *Library Journal*, *The Daily Mail* and *A Mighty Girl*. It was published to mark the 150th anniversary of the overlooked and underestimated classic, as was the deluxe edition of *Little Women*, which Dr. Rioux edited for Penguin Classics. She was interviewed on CBS Sunday Morning, the BBC, NPR, WBUR and WNYC, and by radio stations and newspapers around the world, including the *New York Times*. She can be found online at [anneboydrioux.com](http://anneboydrioux.com).

Hena Khan's middle grade novel *More to the Story* is a retelling of Alcott's classic set within a contemporary American Muslin family. Khan additionally is the award-winning author of the middle grade novels *Amina's Voice* and *Amina's Song* and the *Zayd Saleem: Chasing the Dream* series. Her picture books include *Golden Domes and Silver Lanterns*, *Crescent Moons and Pointed Minarets*, *Night of the Moon* and

***Under My Hijab.***

[Register Now!](#)

**IN THIS ISSUE:**

1. President's Letter
2. Returning Member: Nancy Feresten
3. Application for Membership: Debra Kempf Shumaker
4. Member News

**LETTER FROM  
GUILD PRESIDENT KAREN  
DEANS**

Dear Guild members,

I'd like to begin this letter by expressing gratitude for last month's long-awaited celebration honoring Catherine Reef at the 2021 Nonfiction Award Event. The Zoom event took place on Saturday, May 22, and featured a memorable presentation by Catherine, as well as an insightful introduction by Jennifer Greene, senior editor at Clarion Books.

One of my biggest takeaways from the day, after hearing Cathy speak, was a deeper appreciation for how fortunate we all are to know her. Her long, prolific career reflects someone who possesses a deep fascination with our civilization and a commitment to preserving the history of those who have helped shape it. In her presence that day, I was aware of a timeless quality of elegance and excellence, one that I felt honored and inspired to experience.

During the event, we were treated to a live dramatic "Mary Shelley" monologue, delivered by actor Esther Williamson. Also, a video was shown, featuring Guild book highlights from the past two years. If you didn't get a chance to attend the event, you may [watch the video here](#).

As you can imagine, much went into the production of the Nonfiction Award Event. I'd like to give a huge shout out to Mary Amato for leading the effort with creativity and dedication, as well as to the many Guild members who offered their time and skills to make the event such a success. Thank you!

This month's **Speaker Series Zoom** presentation--our final one for the year--will be held on June 17 at 1 p.m., and will feature authors Anne Boyd Rioux and Hena Khan in conversation about the relevance of *Little Women* today. You may learn more and register for the event [here](#).

While registering for the event, you will have the option to donate to a chosen organization supporting racial justice in children's literature and education. The June recipient is [The Ida B. Wells Society](#), which is a news trade organization with a mission of increasing the ranks, retention and profile of reporters and editors of color in the field of investigative reporting.

Wishing you all a smiling, increasingly mask-less summer out in the world.

All best to you,

Karen

### NANCY FERESTEN REJOINS THE GUILD

The Children's Book Guild is pleased to welcome back Nancy Feresten as a member. During her previous years with the Guild, Nancy was an editor and senior vice president at National Geographic. She is now the publisher at What on Earth Publishing, which includes two nonfiction imprints: What on Earth Books (WoEB) and Britannica Books (BB). WoEB publishes gorgeous, gifty illustrated nonfiction—browsable, narrative, picture book and novelty—that enlarges readers' understanding of the world by offering fresh perspectives, broad views and unusual formats. BB publishes reference books and narrative nonfiction that is fun to browse, full of surprise and delight and seriously educational. Both imprints help kids connect the dots of knowledge and encourage them to believe that the real world is more amazing than anything humans can make up.

Over the course of Nancy's career, her books have garnered hundreds of awards and places on best-book lists. You may remember her from her 17-year stint at National Geographic, where she started as editor-in-chief of Children's Books and ended as senior vice president of Children's Education and Media. She has also held positions at Scholastic and HarperCollins and spent a few years as an outside consultant for a range of publishers on children's publishing strategy and list development. She lives in Greenbelt, MD, with her photographer husband, two particularly charming cats and a cacophony of backyard birds.

### APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP: DEBRA KEMPF SHUMAKER

Author Debra Kempf Shumaker has applied for membership in the Children's Book Guild. Running Press Kids released her book *Freaky, Funky Fish* on May 4. Albert Whitman will publish her second book, *Tell Someone*, in October, and a third book, *Peculiar Primates*, will be out in fall 2022. Debra also publishes articles in kids' magazines.

Debra writes: "I've always been a reader. I was a quiet, shy girl, and books were my friends. My favorite day each week was Library Day at school—I'd come out with an armful of books. They were my doorway



to the world. Through those books, I could ride in a covered wagon with Laura Ingalls, fight crime with Nancy Drew or be a scientist and learn new things about plants and animals. Through all of life's twists and turns, reading has been my constant.

"When I became a mom, I rediscovered children's books and realized I wanted to be more than a reader—I wanted to write. More specifically, I wanted to write picture books in which readers could get lost in both the words and the art, as I did and as my boys did when we read together.

"I took my first writing course through the Institute of Children's Literature, learned about SCBWI and haven't looked back. Although it took more than six years and at least 10 picture book manuscripts before I found an agent, and another few years and more manuscripts to sell my first book, the long journey was worth it. I find the kid-lit community extremely supportive, and I love boosting other writers along the way. And that is what I hope to find with the Children's Book Guild: learning from each other and supporting each other as we pursue our passion to get kids excited about reading.

"I am a member of SCBWI and also the cohost of #PBPitch, a Twitter pitch party for picture books."

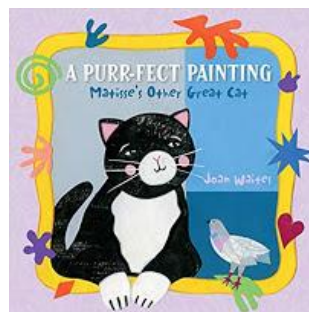
Read more about Debra Shumaker and her books at <https://debrashumaker.com>.

## MEMBER NEWS



After Sherlock Holmes moved into the flat at 221b Baker Street, he nailed a Persian slipper to the side of the mantel, close to where he sat in his chair. In it he kept his odiferous shag tobacco. In BRENDA SEABROOKE's 10th story writing as Dr. Watson, "The Persian Slipper," readers find out where Holmes acquired the slipper (not where you might think!). "The Persian Slipper" is included in *The MX Book of New Sherlock Holmes Stories*, vol. 25. Brenda is thrilled that one of her favorite mystery writers, Peter Lovesey, wrote the introduction to this volume.

Royalties from these MX books support the Stepping Stones School, housed in a former home of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, where he wrote some of his stories of the world's most famous and first consulting detective.



Discover the world of Henri Matisse through the eyes of his cat, La Puce, in JOAN WAITES's new book *A Purr-fect Painting*, released May 28. Join La Puce and his two companions, Minouche and Coussi, as they spend their days in Matisse's sunny seaside apartment watching the artist create his paintings. As La Puce observes Matisse painting his masterpiece *The Cat with Red Fish*, featuring Minouche, he too longs to be the subject of one of the artist's paintings. After Matisse falls ill and can no longer paint standing up, La Puce tries to coax him back into painting by using himself as a model. When an accident happens, La Puce inspires the artist to create again--but this time using paper and scissors!



MEG MEDINA announces the June 1 release by Philomel Books of *Sonia Sotomayor*, volume 16 in the *She Persisted* chapter-book series, inspired by the book of the same title written by Chelsea Clinton and illustrated by Alexandra Boiger. Interior illustrations in *Sonia Sotomayor* are by Gillian Flint. Chelsea Clinton wrote the introduction.

CELEBRATING  
**10**  
YEARS

2010 • 2020

an open book  
FOUNDATION

June 3, 2021  
6:00 pm  
virtual event

Hosted by author Minh Lê

Please Join Us!

Featuring Shannon Hale, LeUyen Pham...

including guest appearances by Meg Medina, Jewell Parker Rhodes and Jason Reynolds

THE FIELD

and Baptiste Paul

THANK YOU TO OUR GENEROUS PUBLISHER SUPPORTERS

ABRAMS CANDLEWICK PRESS LEVINE GUERIDO

**AN OPEN BOOK** is celebrating its 10th anniversary with a virtual event on June 3. Perfect for families, the event invites attendees to step into the classroom for stories, art and fun--just a taste of what happens in the foundation's classroom events. Author Minh Lê will be emcee for the evening, joined by authors Shannon Hale and Baptiste Paul and author-illustrator LeUyen Pham. There will be guest appearances by students, parents, educators, partners and authors **MEG MEDINA**, **Jewell Parker Rhodes** and **Jason Reynolds**. At the end of the evening, there will be a raffle drawing open to all attendees.

**Registration** is free or donation-optional, and there's a **silent auction** the week before with some fun one-of-a-kind items available.



"Letters Unwritten," by Jennifer O'Connell

This summer, **JENNIFER O'CONNELL's** painting "Letters Unwritten" will be in an exhibition at the Phillips Collection that celebrates the collection's hundredth anniversary, "building on the legacy of founder Duncan Phillips and his commitment to presenting, acquiring, and promoting the work of artists of the greater DC region."

For the juried show, titled *Inside Outside, Upside Down*, artists were invited to submit work recently produced "that speaks to the struggle and resiliency of the human spirit in the face of the global COVID-19 pandemic and recent social upheavals."

The show runs from July 17 to September 12, and will be in-person as well as virtual. The opening will be virtual, with a date to be announced.

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### 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 find P&P's events calendar and register for events at: <https://www.politics-prose.com/events>. (Advance registration is required to receive a link.)

Posted by Monthly News at [11:41 AM](#) [0 comments](#) 

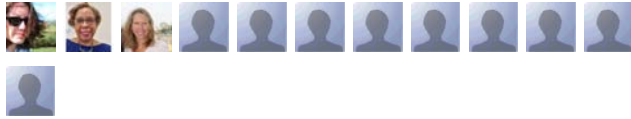
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