

Eric Carle

American, born 1929

Immediately recognizable for his illustrations—primarily collages of patterned, painted paper—Eric Carle has charmed generations since the late 1960s. Though he was born in Syracuse, N.Y., Carle spent most of his childhood and early adult life in Germany, where his parents relocated when he was six. In 1952 Carle moved back to New York, and after working as a designer and art director, he was asked to create designs for a children’s book written by Bill Martin Jr. called *Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See?* The success of this book marked the beginning of Carle’s illustrating and writing career, which now includes over seventy works. He is best known for the wildly popular *The Very Hungry Caterpillar*, which has sold over thirty million copies and has been translated into almost fifty languages since its 1969 publication.

Wendell Minor

American, born 1944

Born in Illinois, Wendell Minor has worked as a designer of cover images for book publishers, illustrating over two thousand books, including Fannie Flagg's *Fried Green Tomatoes at the Whistle Stop Café* and Harper Lee's *To Kill a Mockingbird*. A switch to illustrating children's books allowed Minor to use his lifelong affinity for the outdoors to promote the love and preservation of nature to children. Inspired by his passion for the environment and animals, and his many travels throughout the country, Minor's illustrations reflect the beauty of the American natural world. His award-winning illustrations for *Into the Woods: John James Audubon Lives His Dream* are particularly alluring for their clarity and beauty. Drawn to the story of Audubon's artistic and environmental quest to document the world around him and its inhabitants, Minor illustrates the story with loving detail.

Petra Mathers

German, born 1945

Petra Mathers was born in Todtmoos, Germany, where she worked as an apprentice in a local bookstore. She immigrated to the United States in her twenties, settling in Portland, Oregon. As a favor to a friend, she agreed to assist at a children's bookstore temporarily, but she soon discovered a passion for picture books. Trained as a painter, she became an illustrator, creating art for nearly thirty children's books. After many years of illustrating books written by others, Mathers began to publish her own stories. In 1998 she released *Lottie's New Beach Towel*, the first in her five-book *Lottie's World* series. Bright, spritely, and with characteristic charm, the images and storylines that Mathers creates can be enjoyed by children and parents alike. She is a four-time winner of *The New York Times* annual prize for Best Illustrated Children's Book.

Ashley Bryan

American, born 1923

Bright and characterized by a strong use of color, the artwork of Ashley Bryan brings the feathered friends of his African stories to life. Bryan began writing at a young age in New York and gained success as an artist in the late 1960s. After illustrating several books of folk tales, he became interested in retelling original African stories for a young audience. He sought to interpret the original stories with boldness and vibrancy. One of his most beloved books is *Beat the Story-Drum, Pum-Pum*, a collection of Nigerian folk tales published in 1980 and honored with the American Library Association's Coretta Scott King Award, a prize given to African American authors for inspirational and educational contributions. In 1990 Bryan received the International Reading Association's Arbuthnot Prize, a high honor in children's literature that celebrates an author's lifetime achievements.

Michael Hague

American, born 1948

While growing up in Los Angeles, illustrator Michael Hague became passionately interested in art and visual culture, inspired by Disney films, comic books, and Japanese prints. Upon graduating from the Art Center College of Design in 1972, Hague began submitting portfolios to publishers in hopes of being hired as an illustrator; three years later, his first book, a pop-up book, was published. Now his lush and fanciful drawings can be found in numerous children's books, including classics such as *The Wind in the Willows*, *The Velveteen Rabbit*, and *Alice in Wonderland*. Hague's signature style involves intricate designs of watercolor combined with colored pencil. The detailed drawings, often of fantastic creatures or magical scenes, have a dreamlike quality and inspire a sense of awe in his audiences. In recent years Hague has expanded his illustrations to include graphic novels.

John Parr (J. P.) Miller

American, 1913–2004

During the Great Depression, John Parr Miller—a New York City native with two years of art school to his credit and a widowed stepmother to support—headed to Hollywood to work for Walt Disney Studios. In 1934 he helped start the elite Character Model Department, working on such early animated films as *Snow White* and *Pinocchio*. After serving in World War II, Miller was recruited to participate in a revolutionary project: creating books for children that anyone could afford. In an age when children’s books were luxury items costing two or three dollars, Little Golden Books sold beautifully illustrated stories for twenty-five cents. A great admirer of Matisse who was rarely satisfied with his own work, Miller used bright colors in a flat, modernist style that defined the look of the Golden Books. In his obituary *The New York Times* declared Miller “a huge influence on many of today’s best animators... leading cartoonists, and commercial designers.”

Tedd Arnold

American, born 1949

Born in Elmira, N.Y., Tedd Arnold moved as a boy to Gainesville, Florida where he had his first art lessons in an abandoned dentist's office over the Happy Hour Pool Hall. So perhaps it's no surprise that he grew up to create hilarious children's books about lovable but quirky characters. After earning a fine arts degree from the University of Florida, Arnold first worked as a graphic designer but soon discovered his passion: writing and illustrating for children. Arnold uses pencil, watercolor—and laughter—to create books that are adored by children and critics alike. His honors include an International Reading Association Children's Choice Award for *No Jumping on the Bed!* (1996); two Theodor Seuss Geisel Honors for *Hi! Fly Guy* (2006) and *I Spy Fly Guy!* (2010); and a Mystery Writers of America Best Mystery for Young Adults for his first novel, *Rat Life* (2007).

Margot Zemach

American, 1931–1989

Growing up in Los Angeles, Margot Zemach loved to draw as a way to make people laugh—a challenge during the Depression, when it was difficult to find paper for drawing. After studying at the Art Institute of Los Angeles, Zemach won a Fulbright scholarship to study at the Academy of Fine Arts in Vienna. She once said she dreamed of becoming “an artist of social significance...But it became clear that I really enjoyed drawing and looking at funny pictures more than any other kind.” In 1957 she and fellow Fulbright Scholar Harve Fichstrom married and began a collaboration that produced thirteen of her forty books for children. In a review of their *Duffy and the Devil*—which won the 1974 Caldecott Medal for best children’s book illustrations—*New Yorker* magazine wrote, “Margot Zemach draws like an intoxicated angel.”

Arnold Lobel

American, 1933–1987

For Arnold Lobel—an only child of divorced parents growing up in his grandparents’ ramshackle house in Schenectady, N.Y.—art was his best friend. Often sick and in the hospital, he entertained himself by drawing, and later he made up stories—usually about animals—as a way to make friends. He would go on to write and illustrate more than one hundred books for children before his death at age fifty-four. He is known for his warm, humorous books about “Frog and Toad”—perhaps the most-beloved friendship in children’s literature since A. A. Milne’s Winnie-the-Pooh and Piglet. Lobel said he was more of a daydreamer than a writer or artist. But his awards are a testament to his brilliance as both: a Caldecott Honor—for excellence in illustration—for *Frog and Toad Are Friends*, a Newbery Honor—for excellence in writing—for *Frog and Toad Together*. He won the top Caldecott Medal for *Fables*, exhibited here.

Leo Lionni

American, born Netherlands, 1910–1999

Growing up in Amsterdam, Leo Lionni often walked to the nearby Rijksmuseum to teach himself to draw. By the 1930s he moved to Italy and became a painter in the futurist and avant-garde style. In 1939 he began working in the United States as an art director, creating innovative ad campaigns for Ford, redesigning *Fortune* magazine, and hiring artists such as Calder, de Kooning, and Warhol. At age fifty he quit to pursue a simpler life in Italy. Finding himself on a long train ride without drawing materials, he amused his grandchildren by tearing up bits of colored paper from *Life* magazine to tell them a story. Those scraps became his first children's book, *Little Blue and Little Yellow*, a stunning multi-layered story that explores color theory and racial prejudice. Lionni wrote and illustrated more than forty acclaimed books for children, including *Fish is Fish*—exhibited here—and the Caldecott Honor book *Swimmy*.

Madeleine Gekiere

Swiss, born 1919

Madeleine Gekiere was born in Zurich, Switzerland, in 1919. Her formal study took place in New York at the Art Students League, the Brooklyn Museum School, and New York University. Apart from her illustrations, her work also explores many different media including experimental film, which enhances her storytelling with a creative edge. She taught painting and drawing at the City College of New York and New York University. The illustrations exhibited are from the book *The Reason for the Pelican* by John Ciardi, which won the prestigious William Allen White Book Award and The New York Times annual prize for Best Illustrated Book of the Year in 1959. These drawings demonstrate a clear debt to her fellow countryman Paul Klee. Gekiere also collaborated with author Ray Bradbury to illustrate a magical story about a little boy who is afraid of the night until a little girl named Dark shows him the wondrous things one can find in the night. She also illustrated other notable children's books including an illustrated edition of *Tales* by the Brothers Grimm.

Theodorus van Hoytema

Dutch, 1863-1917

Born in the Netherlands into a large family with six siblings, Theodorus van Hoytema received his first drawing lesson from his eldest sister. Hoytema is most famous for illustrating the first published edition of the beloved classic *The Ugly Duckling* by Hans Christian Andersen and *The Happy Owls* by Celestino Piatti. Working mostly in color lithography, he created beautifully innovative and impressive illustrations of animals. After taking evening classes at the Academy of Fine Arts in the Hague, Hoytema actually worked closely with animals at the Zoological Museum in Leiden, where he was employed to sketch them. His art clearly shows his passion and love for animals. The two books mentioned are the only two to be translated into English and have remained children's classics. Many other of van Hoytema's works, including his animal studies, are owned by the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston and the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam.