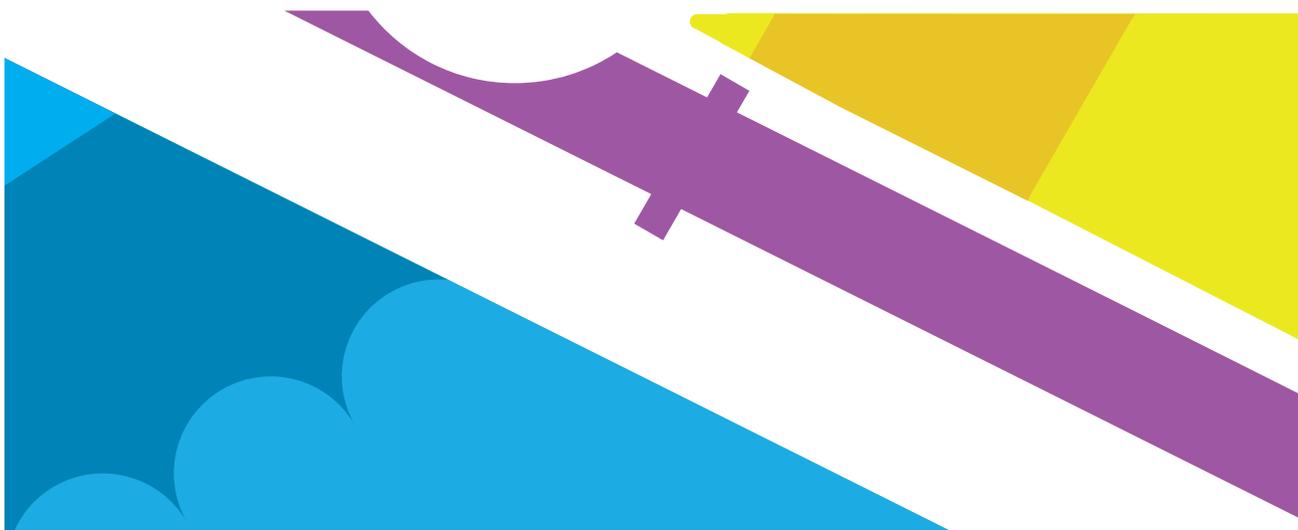


**BREAKING NEW GROUND:**  
CELEBRATING BRITISH WRITERS  
& ILLUSTRATORS OF COLOUR



# **BREAKING NEW GROUND:** Work for New Generations



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ENGLAND**

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Speaking Volumes

# Foreword

Speaking Volumes is run on passion and a total commitment to reading as a tool for change. Borne out of over 50 years' combined experience working in all aspects of the world of literature – publishing, festival programming, event production, arts management, writing – we created *Breaking Ground*. This initiative, of which *Breaking New Ground* is the latest iteration, has one clear goal — to champion a level playing field for all writers, regardless of their ethnic background.

We didn't create *Breaking Ground* out of nothing. Our own personal experiences and those of authors we've worked with over decades have been corroborated by robust research into the lack of diversity in the publishing industry (see 'Writing the Future' by Spread the Word) After a lot of talking, we sat down five years ago and wrote down the concrete ways we could make our own small

contribution to the fight for racial equality in the arts and, we hoped, beyond.

Since we articulated those first hopes for *Breaking Ground*, we've taken British writers of colour to Belgium, Finland, Germany, Portugal, Spain and the USA, and put on many, many events across the UK. We've supported young writers as they've read at their first international events or published their first books; connected authors at home and abroad; introduced new artists to established writers who have become mentors; sold books and encouraged book deals; inspired research and action into issues of racial equality in publishing. Along the way, we've worked with numerous brilliant partner organisations, publishers, venues and festivals who share our belief in opening the doors to all.

Despite those successes, *Breaking Ground* isn't done. As our friends at Pop Up Projects make so

clear in their article in this publication, we're in uncertain times, with increasing intolerance and xenophobia here and around the world reversing previous steps made towards racial equality and social justice. What to do in such times? The Centre for Literacy in Primary Education and BookTrust, who have also contributed to this brochure, point to new generations as the way forward. Research by both organisations shows that literature for young people is even less representative of Britain's multicultural society than books for adults, and that fewer authors of colour are allowed into this sphere. Yet, by making a change in the books we produce for our children – a change where diversity and tolerance is taken for granted – we can encourage the dreams of everyone.

That is the idea at the heart of *Breaking New Ground*, a resource which highlights the depth and breadth of talent of British writers and illustrators of colour creating work for young people. Yes, they do exist, even if they may be flying under the mainstream radar — for now. Read them, book them, buy their books, tell your schools about them, look them up ... and give these authors an equal chance to tell the story of a proudly diverse, twenty-first century UK to our new generations.

**Sharmilla Beezmohun, Sarah Sanders, Nick Chapman – Speaking Volumes**

# Our Children Are Reading

As the creators, makers and gatekeepers of literature for children, we are responsible for what they read. We make choices on behalf of young readers – about what stories get told and by whom, what gets written and drawn, what gets edited, printed, platformed, programmed, reviewed, awarded, ordered, stocked, studied, taught – way before *they* get to choose what they want to read. We make choices based on all sorts of criteria – quality, style, pace – but also on what stories we think children want to read. What’s viable, what’s vital, what’s new, what’s niche. What’s the Next Big Thing.

Who makes these choices all along the way, from first draft to face-up in a high street bookshop? As it turns out it’s pretty much mainly white people.

In the UK, 90% of people who work in

**Who makes these choices all along the way, from first draft to face-up in a high street bookshop? As it turns out it’s pretty much mainly white people.**

publishing (Bookcareers, 2017) and 97% of librarians are white British (CILIP, 2018) — statistics aren’t available for booksellers or literature festivals, but we can assume there are similarly dominant demographics among decision makers (book buyers, marketers, programmers, promoters) in these fields too. And while, of course, many white British

professionals in publishing and literature are passionate about diversity, and can and do commission, edit and publish black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) writers and illustrators, findings from enquiries into the state of diversity in publishing continue to depict a scenario in which a dominant ethnic group persistently excludes minority voices. Just 2% of authors appearing at the three largest festivals in 2015 (Edinburgh, Hay, Cheltenham) were BAME (Spread the Word, 2017); 4% of audited children’s books published in 2017 featured BAME main characters (CLPE, 2018); 5% of young adult authors (UCL, 2018) and 1% of illustrators (Pop Up, 2017) are BAME; neither of the two oldest prizes for children’s literature, the Carnegie and Kate Greenaway Medals, have ever been won by BAME authors. What makes this picture especially stark, particularly in the field of children’s publishing, is that, while 14% of the UK population is BAME (much higher in urban areas: 40+% and growing in larger cities like London and Birmingham), 28% of secondary and 31% of primary children in this country are BAME.

At Pop Up we recently undertook a detailed survey of 24 BAME children’s authors. 50% of these authors said they had encountered discrimination, racism or censorship in their

experiences in publishing. Some shared first-hand ‘anecdotal’ experiences of the problematic ideas and perspectives that children’s publishing can have around the ethnic identities of authors and characters, and especially the contexts and plots that ethnic minority characters should inhabit within the pages of a marketable book. These, often very personal, subjective experiences must be heard and believed. Because in order to embrace the full, boundary-pushing power of diversity in children’s publishing, we need to acknowledge the reality that many BAME children’s authors face in getting and staying published.

Clearly the choices that we, collectively, are making on behalf of children – about what and who they read – do not come close to ensuring that children of all backgrounds get to see themselves, their identities, perspectives, families, communities, cultures or histories reflected in the pages of the books they read. More than this, and regardless of their own identities, today’s young readers don’t just need to see themselves in books — it is vital that they see each other.

Hillary Clinton’s fated 2016 presidential campaign featured an ad titled ‘Our Children

## Today’s young readers don’t just need to see themselves in books — it is vital that they see each other.

Are Watching’, in which children across America sat in front of TVs watching Donald Trump’s hate speeches, incitements to violence and cruel mockery of people with disabilities. You could have made a similar ad here, that same year, in the run-up to the EU referendum. Children reading headline after headline screaming what collectively amounted to the caps-lock chant of ‘FOREIGNERS OUT!’ Globally, hysterical xenophobia, given mass and multimedia platforms, lured racists from their hidey holes and far right ‘populism’ swept across our political spectrums. Emboldened far-right leaders could now take to social media not just to defend a boy for mock-waterboarding a Syrian refugee child in an English school, but to egg the bully on and taunt the victim, without any fear of consequences. Every day, every week, we consume story after cruel story, delivered by platformed, hate-mongering political opportunists, depicting Muslim

women as objects of ridicule, drowning refugees as swarming rats, migration as invasion, cultivating a hostile environment in which Caribbean-born British citizens could be renditioned ‘home’. These stories, these words, stay with us one day, only to be supplanted the next by another act of verbal cruelty, as politics lurches from one extremism to another. In our daily news, wherever we source it, this drip-drip message – that foreign-ness, otherness, difference is to be vilified, that minorities and progressives are enemies of the people – cannot fail to filter down. A generation of children are watching, listening and reading.

It is OUR collective responsibility – OUR response to this climate of hate – to ensure that what children read today is inclusive, humane and worldly by being rich in diverse identities and perspectives. We all subscribe, I’m sure, to that analogue concept of The Children’s Book as a journey through, refuge from and portal beyond the real world we inhabit. Good books offer simultaneous escapism and reflection, windows and mirrors. Through reading we are spirited away into other people’s shoes. We can walk in the shoes of the boy who fled the horrors of war or genocide only to end up in the dead-end winter mud of the Calais ‘jungle’, while news stories swirl

around us propagating stereotypes of boys like him as fraudsters, thieves, terrorists-in-disguise. Children's literature is an experiential teacher, cultivating empathy while developing every reader's sense of self, place in the world, relationship to others. We learn about the *diversity* of things — that our communities and our societies are complex ecosystems in which people are intimately connected and have responsibilities to one another; that we cannot build successful worlds *without* the diversity upon which life thrives.

The assumption we least want to perpetuate here is that British children's books and stories by British children's writers of colour have to be *about* diversity or difference; that their plots should be driven by issues of identity, race or discrimination; that their protagonists of colour have a duty to speak for the victims or the dispossessed; that it is politically imperative for BAME storytellers to raise their voices higher and shout louder than the haters.

This is about *seeing* and *being seen*. These are duties which belong to every single one of us in publishing, literature and education. It's about diversifying the whole universe of children's literature, tipping the balance so that, for every escaped slave, child soldier

## We cannot build successful worlds without the diversity upon which life thrives.

or gangland hoodoos in children's books, there are hundreds more pirates and princesses, wizards and witches, heroes and villains who aren't white, and whose racial identities don't drive the plot. It's about infusing fantasy, restituting history, time-travelling and world-building without white-washing the past *and* the future.

None of this will ever happen until we bring British children's writers of colour to the fore and facilitate platforms for their work in every corner of the children's literature sphere. And here is our golden opportunity to do exactly that. *Breaking New Ground* must be a game-changer. It is a tool, and those who have the power – the gatekeepers of literature for children, those of us who commission, programme and buy books – must wield it, so that *all* our children have every opportunity to find themselves and others in their stories.

**Dylan Calder, Pop Up Projects**

## Uday Thapa Magar

### *Winter Horses*

*It's somehow representative of my Asian background and British/Western education. I enjoy the duality of things and I try to incorporate it. The Japanese-influenced mountains and sun against the New York skyline. Galloping horses against a still landscape, dawn — between night and day. Also inspired by seeing the dawn in the cold winter morning before my commute to Southampton.*



# Reflecting Realities

## Who

The Centre for Literacy in Primary Education (CLPE) is a charity working with all those involved in teaching literacy in primary schools. Our work raises the achievement of children by supporting schools to teach literacy more effectively and exemplifying how to locate quality children's literature at the heart of all learning.

## What

In 2018 we announced our pioneering Reflecting Realities initiative, which aimed to produce the first ever comprehensive study into ethnic representation in UK children's literature. Funded by Arts Council England and produced annually, the survey will seek to assess the extent of representation of black, Asian and minority

ethnic (BAME) characters in children's books published in the UK. The survey was produced in consultation with a steering committee of leading experts in publishing and education and was inspired by the model from the Co-operative Children's Book Center (CCBC), School of Education, University of Wisconsin-Madison, USA, which has published data on US children's books since 1985.

## Why

As an organisation we are in a unique position, in that we offer a bridge from the classroom to the publishing house. We curate what, for many time-deprived teachers, is an overwhelming volume of books and showcase the best that the industry has to offer through our online platforms, professional development programme and extensive reference library. Sourcing books

**Sourcing books with characters and contexts that resonate with the children is paramount to shaping them as readers and broadening their world view.**

with characters and contexts that resonate with children is paramount to shaping them as readers and broadening their world view. We encourage educators to be discerning and critically reflective in their text choices and recommendations. The challenges of sourcing quality, inclusive and positively representative books has been a long-standing concern. We know that the industry recognises this issue of under-representation and has made pledges to redress this. The introduction of our survey was an attempt to contribute meaningfully to these efforts by producing a benchmark. The continuation of this work will provide an ongoing means to measure change and offer guidance to all stakeholders.

## How

In the first cycle of this work, UK publishers were invited to submit all children's books first published in the UK in 2017 featuring black, Asian and minority ethnic characters in fiction, non-fiction and picture book categories aimed at an age range of 3-11 years.

An analysis framework was devised to guide the reviewing of submissions. The review consisted of considerations of both the extent of BAME presence as well as the quality of this presence in the content of the titles submitted. Ethnic categories were drawn from the UK Census categories with appropriate extensions to these definitions to accommodate broader representations of ethnicity in literature. In terms of the quality of representation, the framework is structured to consider how many BAME characters featured in each book, their position in the narrative, their degree of agency and the quality of the representation both in the text and in illustrations.

## Findings

The findings of the first study revealed that representation was low and that, of the 9,115 children's books published in the UK in

**The findings of the first study revealed that, of the 9,115 children's books published in the UK in 2017, only 4% featured a black, Asian or minority ethnic character.**

2017, only 4% featured a BAME character.

Every ethnic minority group was significantly under-represented. The Department for Education reported in 2017 that 32.1% of pupils of compulsory school age in England were of minority ethnic origins. In stark contrast, the study revealed that the books published in 2017 did not reflect the realities that exist within Britain's classrooms — only 1% of children's books had a black, Asian or minority ethnic main character and a quarter of the books submitted only featured some kind of BAME presence in the form of background characters. The full report including findings and recommendations can be freely downloaded from our website.

## What next

The findings of the first report were widely reported, with many surprised by the significant extent of under-representation in this area.

The American equivalent produced by the CCBC has been established for over 35 years and during that time there has been a steady positive upward trajectory. Whilst the imbalance in this context hasn't been totally redressed and there is still much work to be done, the annual cycle means that the industry is kept to account. Our first cycle of findings offers a benchmark for determining progress in this area in the UK. Adopting the same approach of producing an annual reporting cycle increases the likelihood that attitudes within publishing and cultural education will be altered and the importance of representation in children's literature will be kept in the public consciousness rather than being reduced to a conversational trend that arises once every few years. We hope this will culminate in meaningful, long-standing change.

**Farrah Serroukh, Centre for Literacy in Primary Education**

## BookTrust Represents: reaching more readers

*I am a bookworm, the daughter of a bookworm, but always assumed that I couldn't be a published children's writer because I wasn't white and dead. In my early thirties, I found out about Malorie Blackman and thanks to Pig Heart Boy, I finally found my real voice.* Patrice Lawrence

BookTrust is the UK's largest children's reading charity. We work to get every child in the UK reading. We put great books into the hands of children from every demographic, every colour and every socio-economic background in our diverse nation. Reaching out to *everyone* with books is more than a vision for us, it's what we do. For years, we have been seeking out the books that will enable us to most effectively reach, inspire and entertain all children.

Finding books that truly reflect the diversity of families in the UK has been challenging and we are pleased about the work the children's books industry is doing to try and ring in the changes.

Why do we care so much? We know from years of experience that representational voices in children's books is important for all children from *all backgrounds*. We know that books have an important role as mirrors. The world they represent impacts on how

young readers see themselves and the world around them, on their motivation to read, and on their aspirations to become the writers and illustrators of the future. And we also know that books are windows, providing valuable insight into a broad spectrum of different lives and cultures. Children need and deserve to hear a range of voices and perspectives.

As part of our mission, BookTrust has initiated a far-reaching research project with University College London to look at representation of authors and illustrators of colour in children's books published in the UK over the last 11 years. Never before has such a comprehensive picture of this been available. In order to really make effective change, we need to have an accurate baseline of the picture.

Headline stats from our research show that, over the past 11 years, fewer than 2% of all authors and/or illustrators of children's books published in the UK are British people of colour. As part of our research, we interviewed British authors and illustrators of colour about their experiences. What has enabled them to write, illustrate and publish their children's books — and what are the barriers in their way? It's clear from our research that many of those interviewed believed for a long time that their ethnicity

*When I go into schools to read, the response from kids of colour is incredible. You can see their faces light up with possibility. I underestimated the importance until I saw it with my own eyes. There's that phrase 'you cannot be what you cannot see'. It's important that all children understand that people who look like me can do jobs like this. It's not just for posh white women or old white guys with beards.* Nadia Shireen

meant they simply couldn't be an author or illustrator at all. If children now in school don't see themselves in books and don't know any authors or illustrators who look like them, they may also hold that belief and never reach their potential as a writer or artist.

Based on our findings and working with a steering group of experts including author Patrice Lawrence and illustrator Nadia Shireen, as well as inclusive publishers – such as Knights Of – and booksellers, BookTrust is starting a project to support and encourage more authors and illustrators of colour to become successful children's book creators.

This *Breaking New Ground* brochure clearly shows the range of great talent that we have in the UK. We want to shout from

the rooftops about this brochure, to help promote the creators in it and to encourage the development of more talented authors and illustrators of colour.

So, how are we going to do it?

We invite all the authors and illustrators in this *Breaking New Ground* brochure to join BookTrust's new project: **BookTrust Represents**.

**BookTrust Represents** will support and subsidise authors and illustrators of colour to promote their work and to reach more readers through events in bookshops, festivals and schools. We will also be offering training and mentoring for less experienced writers in the project — our research shows how important and needed this is.

We believe school visits are a key driver for inclusivity, providing income for authors and illustrators, promoting wonderful books, and also providing role models for children of colour to see writing and illustrating books as a possible route for them to follow in the future. Our work at BookTrust has shown the power of author visits to schools — the power to inspire creativity and to promote reading for all children. That's why we will be offering schools free visits from authors and illustrators of colour in this brochure and beyond.

To find out more, see our website and check out all of our book recommendations — we showcase an inclusive range of books including a brilliant book review every day (#BookoftheDay on Twitter).

**BookTrust**

## My time with children's literature

The full colour picture book, *My Brother Sean*, written by Petronella Breinburg and which I illustrated, was a breakthrough publication on two counts. Firstly, it was the first picture book by a mainstream UK publisher (The Bodley Head, 1973) which featured black children aimed at the UK market. Secondly, I was nominated for the Kate Greenaway Medal for the illustrations, and though I was in the end runner up to Raymond Briggs' *Father Christmas*, it focused publicity on the paucity of material in schools and libraries which took account of the growing population of black children entering the British school system.

It seemed that, of the mainstream publishers, only The Bodley Head were willing to risk publishing books aimed at children with a Caribbean heritage, as for a while books by Petronella Breinburg, illustrated by myself or Ossie Murray, were the only ones available.

The presumption may well have been that there would have been a limited market for these books. This, however, proved to be a false presumption as there was a positive response not just from schools and libraries, but also from the commercial market.

By the 1980s there was a general acknowledgement of the growing multicultural nature of British society, and there were a number of new and brilliant children's authors and storytellers making an impact on the scene, and who were in demand for school and library visits. These included writers and poets such as James Berry, Faustin Charles, John Agard, Grace Nichols, Malorie Blackman, Valerie Bloom, Alex Pascall, Benjamin Zephaniah and others.

From the mid-1960s on, a number of independent black book publishers were established, namely New Beacon, Allison &

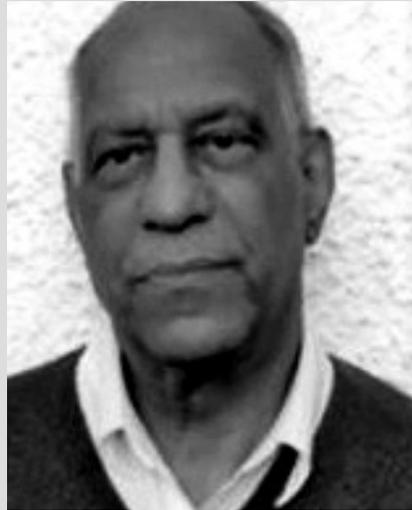
Busby and Bogle L'Ouverture Publications, but they were not principally concerned with children's literature. Later, such publishers as Tamarind, Arawidi and Black Amber were formed specialising in exploring the lives of children of Caribbean heritage; however, they were at a severe disadvantage compared to mainstream publishers, as the cost of printing full colour books in a pre-digital age was prohibitive, being complicated processes involving photographic plates and offset printing. Nor was the current practice of outsourcing cheaper printing of books to China and other Asian countries a possibility.

After completing the illustration of a trio of books written by Petronella Breinburg, I launched out, writing and illustrating my own picture books. Overseas and foreign language editions followed, plus a couple of books on the national curriculum meant that I was able, like others mentioned, to rely increasingly on children's books as a source of income, supplemented by school and library visits.

The pressure for reflections of the presence and experiences of black children in the UK national curriculum and in schools and libraries was bolstered, in my opinion, by the launch in London in 1982 of the International Book Fair of Radical Black and Third World Books (often referred to as The

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Black Bookfair). This Book Fair was one of the outstanding achievements of the black community in the UK and, during the course of its 12-year existence, achieved its declared aim of being a 'meeting of the continents of writers, publishers, distributors, booksellers, artists, musicians, film makers, and the people who inspire and consume their creative productions'. Many mainstream publishers participated in the Book Fair, which also showcased different cultural presentations including poetry, prose readings, drama, music and film. Participants came from Africa, Asia,



### Errol Lloyd ●●●●

Born in Jamaica and coming to the UK as a young man, Errol Lloyd started out as an illustrator of children's stories, being nominated for the Kate Greenaway Medal for illustrations for the first full-colour picture book he worked on, *My Brother Sean*, written by Petronella Breinburg. He subsequently wrote and illustrated his own stories. His other children's work includes novels and a book on black history. His first novel, *Many Rivers to Cross*, was runner-up for the Carnegie Medal. His work has been published in many foreign editions and languages, as well as Braille. Errol has undertaken hundreds of school and library visits, and his children's work also includes plays for the Tricycle (now Kiln) Theatre, the Oxford Playhouse and Carib Theatre. His main aim is to write stories featuring children from ethnic minorities, but appealing to all. Errol Lloyd lives in north London.

### Selected Illustration/Author-Illustrator Picture Books, Non-Fiction and Fiction

- The Big Gold Robbery*. Oxford: Heinemann, 1993. Fiction. (6-8)
- The Casa Montego Smugglers*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001. Fiction. (10+)
- Celebrating Black History*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016. History. (8-11)
- Doctor Shawn*. Written by Petronella Breinburg. London: The Bodley Head Children's Books, 1975. (3-5)
- Facing the Sea: A New Anthology from the Caribbean Region for Secondary Schools*. Ed. Anne Walmsley. Oxford: Heinemann, 1986. (11+)
- Leonora and the Giddy House*. Harlow: Pearson Education (Longman), 1994. (4-6)
- Many Rivers to Cross*. London: Random House, 1995. Fiction. (11+)
- Nini at Carnival*. London: The Bodley Head, 1978. (3-5)
- Nandy's Bedtime*. London: The Bodley Head, 1982. (3-5)
- My Brother Sean*. Written by Petronella Breinburg. London: The Bodley Head Children's Books, 1973. (3-5)
- Ravi at the Fun-fair*. Glasgow and London: Blackie & Son and Puffin (new ed.). 1992. (3-5)
- Sasha and the Bicycle Thieves*. Oxford: Heinemann, 1988. Fiction. (6-8)
- Sean's Red Bike*. Written by Petronella Breinburg. London: The Bodley Head Children's Books, 1975. (3-5)
- Shawn Goes to School*. Written by Petronella Breinburg. London: The Bodley Head, 1974. (3-5)
- This is Me! Me! B!* Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2003. Biography. (8-10)

Central America and the USA, as well as the UK and other parts of Europe. The range of books on display, including children's literature, gave a tremendous boost to the exciting possibilities of a diverse range of literary voices and expressions, and its impact was felt far and wide.

It was shortly after this period that I wrote my first novel for young adults, which was runner-up for the 1996 Children's Book Award. The significance of this, as far as I was concerned, was that the outcome of the competition was based on the poll of young readers nationwide, which revealed a willingness of children from a wide range of backgrounds, though mainly white, to engage sympathetically with experiences of those which may have been considered vastly different from their own.

Since those days, I believe there has been a downturn in the interest of mainstream publishers and educators in representing diversity in the wake of terrorist attacks on the streets of Britain. Multiculturalism has come under severe attack, based on the dubious notion that, if there is a unifying 'British' culture which the population as a whole subscribes to, there would be less susceptibility to outside influences.

In subsequent years, I did a fair number of

## **I believe there needs to be a concerted effort to explore the past as a pointer to future possibilities**

book reviews for *Books for Keeps*, the leading children's book magazine; inevitably, the books I was asked to review featured black children, and I noted that the majority of those were published in the USA. In other words, there seemed to be a downturn in the British publishers' commitment to publish the range of books that would meet the needs of an increasing black and mixed-race section of the population.

Much of what I have written above is based on anecdotal evidence as there has, until recently, been little research or published material on the emerging multicultural children's literature sector. But I believe there needs to be a concerted effort to explore the past as a pointer to future possibilities, as there is the ever-present threat of collective amnesia of past achievements and the absence of any roadmap for encouraging the emergence of new talent.

**Errol Lloyd, January 2019**

**Ken Wilson-Max**

### ***Grandma's Hair***

*Both my grandmothers were remarkable women thrust into a new world in the 1920s and '30s. They managed to forge very distinct paths for themselves and their children. My dad's mum lived in a remote village near the Zimbabwe-Mozambique border, so we spent more time with my maternal gran. As a child, she lived on a huge ranch with her brothers and sisters. But after her British father died his family seized the farm, disowned the children and sent them to their village. I tried many times to bring my memories of her to life, but always struggled with her difficult change of circumstances, until I remembered her love for the family. This image feels like a success, finally.*



## Feel Free

I was delivering a workshop in a girls' school in east London a few years ago. Most of the girls were Muslim and wore hijab. The girls in the workshop were the brightest in the school. I set them a task to create a central character for their story. After a few minutes I asked what they had come up with. I went round the room. Sarah, Lizzie, Lyra, Christina ... I had to stop them. The girls in the class were called Alia, Farhana, Nusrat and Fatima. I asked them why they hadn't used a name they identified with culturally like their mother's, sister's or brother's? They looked at me like they couldn't believe what I had said.

'Who wants to read a story like that sir! You don't see those books on the shelves or in bookshops!'

It broke my heart. Not only could they not see themselves in the books they read at

### 'Who wants to read a story like that sir! You don't see those books on the shelves or in bookshops!'

school or in the library, they couldn't even see themselves in their own stories. They had made themselves invisible. We had a long discussion about it, and I made them change the characters' names. Some of them struggled to do it. The notion of not being the hero of your own story was so deeply conditioned that they struggled to break it. After we finished the workshops, a few of them came up to me, interested writers, and asked me if I really believed they had something to say, a story to tell. I sat them down and told them that not only

did they have stories, but that the world needed them to write these stories.

At a time when we're thinking about how important it is to be European or not, I think back to that experience and those girls, and the more pressing question for me becomes how important it is to be human? Whilst we go back and forth about what it means to lose our identity, this group of girls has none. As we discuss the benefits of freedom of movement, these girls aren't even free in their own minds.

I have seen the (pitiful) statistics of books published by black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) writers in the past ten years. I get asked a lot about diversity in children's publishing and I always tell the story about the girls. Facts, figures and case studies backed up by in-depth research are vitally important in pushing representation at different levels, but you can see through this particular experience that publishing more widely is more than just a publishing issue; it's a social justice issue, a human rights issue. Publishing more representatively will unpick years of conditioned responses to how marginalised communities feel about themselves.

There was one girl who stayed behind

**I want to look back in 30 years and see how far we've come. I want to see children's books written by BAME authors considered as classics, I want to be able to say that we started the conversation but that it didn't stop there. It wasn't just all talk.**

after everyone had left. She stood quietly, thoughtful. Her writing was natural and she already had a strong grasp of what makes a good story. I ripped out a piece of paper from my notebook and wrote on it. *Your stories matter. Your words matter. Don't be afraid of who you are or where you come from. Write.* I handed it to her. She folded it carefully, slipped it into her notebook and left.

This is my wish for all publishing but particularly children's publishing. I want to

look back in 30 years and see how far we've come. I want to see children's books written by BAME authors considered as classics, I want to be able to say that we started the conversation but that it didn't stop there. It wasn't just all talk. More writers like me were published. More stories that I could recognise and that represented a wider experience were published. That barriers to being published at every level were removed. That stories that were often put in the 'other' bracket sold well; that editors and publishers looked like me; that a group of girls in an east London school didn't think anything of putting themselves in their own story. I want to be able to say all of that and more.

All the great lessons we learn about our lives are often through a prism of our experiences and our stories. In the hope for a better future, it is vital that all children and young adults have a healthy self-perception of themselves. This group of girls excelled in every subject and will do well at every level of education, but here they were making themselves invisible. I think of that experience every time I start writing a story for young people. It haunts me. I hope to see this change in my lifetime and will continue to contribute to making it happen.

**Irfan Master, January 2019**



### **Irfan Master** ● ●

Irfan Master is the critically acclaimed author of *Out of Heart*, which was longlisted for the CILIP Carnegie Medal for Children and the UKLA Book Award 2018. His first novel, *A Beautiful Lie*, was shortlisted for the Waterstone's Children's Book Prize, the Branford Boase Award for debut authors and was featured on the USBBY Outstanding International Book Honour List. He has made numerous contributions to published anthologies including a short story for *A Change Is Gonna Come* (2017), an award-winning anthology of short stories and poetry for young adults written by authors from black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) backgrounds. Of Gujarati heritage, Irfan is based in south-east London.

[www.irfanmaster.com/](http://www.irfanmaster.com/)

#### **Fiction**

*A Beautiful Lie*. London: Bloomsbury Children's Books, 2011. (YA)  
*Out of Heart*. London: Hot Key Books, 2017. (YA)

## An Excerpt from *John Boyega's Paper Cup*

**T**his is an excerpt from a short story I wrote for young readers. Although I do write contemporary fiction for TV and radio, it's been a long time since I've written anything set now for children, which might be because I'm feeling my age. All children's fiction is, in one way or another, about confidence and friendship and love. My story is about that most difficult year, Year 7, the first at secondary school, where friendships begin to shift and the world can seem a very lonely place. Nathan has grown up with Lloyd, but now it's as if he has been left behind. The things Nathan likes are suddenly uncool to Lloyd. In my story Nathan comes to realise his own worth and be confident that who he is and what he does are valid and important, whether he actually gets to meet his hero John Boyega at Comic Con or not. **Catherine Johnson**

### From *John Boyega's Paper Cup*

It was the last full day of half term and I lined up the BlasTech DH 17 and aimed it at the Stormtrooper below. He was moving fast, crossing the basketball court at the side of the flats, but I had a mark on him.

I checked with Finn, he looked down at me and nodded.

For a few seconds I watched as two more came onto the court and started laughing and joking around. They couldn't see me, up here. I squeezed the trigger.

'Nate! Nathan?'

'Mum!'

I rolled away from the window just as she came in holding her phone. The blaster evaporated out of my hands into thin air. Finn said nothing. He was only a poster on the wall above my bed.

Outside the three Stormtroopers, Lloyd and the others, were laughing.

Mum looked at me and almost did a double take like in a cartoon.

'What are you wearing?' Then her phone started buzzing in her bag but she ignored it.

'It's my Finn jacket.' I said. 'You know? Like in *Star Wars*. Gulizar helped, she's in my class.' I stood up, so she could see. 'It's not leather or anything. We did it in art club.'

'Not bad!' She said. 'I wouldn't mind one like that, only without the gaffer tape.' She

**For a few seconds I watched as two more came onto the court and started laughing and joking around. They couldn't see me, up here. I squeezed the trigger.**

frowned. 'Or that. Is it...?' She reached out and touched the clasp I'd used on a pocket.

'It came off an old buggy.' I said.

'I hope you washed it.' She pulled her hand away quick. 'I'll be home for seven.' She smoothed down her nurse's uniform. 'And no going out, not even as far as Lloyd's, unless your cousin goes with you.' She stopped, looked at me hard. 'Has something gone down with you and Lloyd? Only I haven't seen him round here all week. Are you two going to that Comic thing then? Only I thought his Dad was going to call me about that?'

I kept my face steady, all nice and level.

'No worries Mums.' I said and shrugged. 'It's all cool. Comic Con's still happening. I just don't know what Lloyd's doing today.'

Which was a lie. I knew exactly what



### Catherine Johnson ● ●

Catherine Johnson, of Jamaican-Welsh heritage, grew up in north London. She has written over 20 novels for young readers. Her most recent historical novels were nominated for the Carnegie Medal. *Sawbones* won the Young Quills Award for best historical fiction for 12+, and *The Curious Tale of The Lady Caraboo* was shortlisted for the Booksellers' Young Adult Prize. She has also written for TV including *Rough Crossings* for BBC2 with Simon Schama and popular continuing drama *Holby City* on BBC1. Her film work includes the award-winning *Bullet Boy* (2004), and her radio play, *Fresh Berries*, was shortlisted for the Prix Italia. She has been a Reader in Residence at the London Southbank Centre's Imagine Children's Literature Festival. Catherine lives in Hastings.

[www.catherinejohnson.co.uk/](http://www.catherinejohnson.co.uk/)

### Selected Fiction

*Arctic Hero*. Edinburgh: Barrington Stoke, 2008. (9+)

*Blade and Bone*. London: Walker Books, 2016. (10-13)

*Brave New Girl*. London: Frances Lincoln Children's Books, 2011. (9-14)

*The Curious Tale of The Lady Caraboo*. London: Corgi Transworld, 2015. (13+)

*Freedom*. Witney, Oxon: Scholastic, 2018. (9-11)

*A Nest of Vipers*. London: Corgi, 2008. (9-11)

*Nightmare Card*. Edinburgh: Barrington Stoke, 2011. (9-11)

*Race To The Frozen North*. Edinburgh: Barrington Stoke, 2018. (9-11)

*Sawbones*. London: Walker Books, 2013. (10-13)

he was doing. Lloyd was down on the basketball court. Now he was in the basketball team at school, he thought – no, he had told me to my face – all this stuff I did, all the making things that we used to do together, was rubbish. And Lloyd’s Dad had promised to take us to the Comic Con, OK not *into* Comic con — but as his Dad worked in a warehouse down on the river next to the exhibition centre we could hang around. Watch as all the guests rolled up. This year John Boyega was going to be there. Finn in Rogue One. I’d been working on this jacket since September. Five whole weeks nearly every other lunch break.

I wave her away. ‘Honest Mum. S’OK.’  
‘You’re usually thick as thieves.’ She says.  
‘We’re OK, Mum.’ I smile, easy, so she knows I’m alright.

Oh, I’ve seen Lloyd plenty of times over half term, walking across the estate, playing basketball. But he hasn’t talked to me. Not once. I couldn’t tell Mum.

It’s the worst thing when she does that worried face and Mum looked stressed enough already. I watched her cross the hall and call the lift. Then her phone went again and she answered it this time. It was her friend from work, Shauna, waiting for her in the car downstairs.

‘Your cousin is coming over, he should have been here by now!’ She said as the lift

**Now he was in the basketball team at school, he thought – no, he had told me to my face – all this stuff I did, all the making things that we used to do together, was rubbish.**

doors opened.

‘Mums, it’s OK. I am twelve. I don’t need Jamal to babysit.’

Mum stepped into the lift. ‘He’s not babysitting, love he’s...’

But I didn’t hear the rest because the lift doors shut. I stepped back into the flat and closed the front door. I saw my reflection in the hall mirror. The jacket was good. Too good not to get to Comic Con. In my head I imagined seeing John Boyega step out of a car, no a limo, waving at everyone, then maybe he’d see me. I’d wave back at him, we’d chat maybe, about films and things. Maybe he’d sign my jacket. Maybe he’d let me have a selfie ....

I sighed. Took off my jacket. I was never going to get to see the real Finn now.

**Emily Hughes**

***Weird Poster***

*I was sleepily awaiting the 48 bus and looked up to see a star directly above.*

*I had a strange sensation of that star rapidly spinning into my head, splitting myself in two, but felt it to be a calm and positive halving.*

*I don’t know if it meant much, and the feeling was brief, but I was glad to get to explore it a bit more here.*



# To the woman crying uncontrollably in the next stall

*After a Kim Addonizio poem with the same title, my poem explores the love of nostalgia and womanhood. I wanted to write a rallying cry for it to be known that women support women. I'm really excited for this poem to be include in **Breaking New Ground** as the previous **Breaking Ground** booklets have been monumental in my growth. **Amina Jama***

## To the woman crying uncontrollably in the next stall after Kim Addonizio

*I love you because I loved you once*  
- Faye Guy & Suhaiymah Manzoor-Khan

If you've ever felt the love of nostalgia, ever turned your pillow round and found a stain belonging to Sept 2016, ever opened a cupboard beneath the stairs and rollerblades you bought yourself to forget fell out on your legs and felt like loss, ever opened a packet of paprika violently, made an angel in the red, ever drowned your robe in an overflowing bath, your body still inside, ever closed your eyes and kissed your knuckles. ever turned the heating off and imagined you were in an ice-rink, ever prostrated apologising for rarely prostrating, ever locked yourself in a bathroom, ever turned off fairy lights only to turn them back on, ever left the tap running for fear of being left alone, ever ripped up postcards because memories are hard / listen I love you, it gets easier



## Amina Jama

Amina Jama is a Somali-British writer. She is studying for a BA in English with Creative Writing at Goldsmiths University, London. An alumna of Barbican Young Poetry, a member of Octavia Poetry Collective, and a co-host of BoxedIN. Amina has facilitated for the Roundhouse Poetry Collective and Battersea Arts Centre. She writes to explore displacement, dual cultural identity and family and has been published in numerous anthologies, as well as shortlisted for the Outspoken 2018 Poetry Prize. In 2018, her work was studied by literature students at the University of Bristol. She has been commissioned by the BBC, The Queens Gallery, Buckingham Palace and the London Mayor's Office. In 2018 Amina was one of six Black British writers to perform at Bozar, the Institute of Fine Arts in Brussels, Belgium, as part of the **Breaking Ground** Europe tour.

[@\\_aminajama](#)

### Poems included in:

*Poems Out Loud*. London: Ladybird, 2019. (4+)  
*Rising Stars: New Young Voices in Poetry*. Hereford: Otter-Barry Books, 2017.



# Full List of Authors and Illustrators

All 104 authors and illustrators in the brochure are listed here in alphabetical order by surname. Their main areas of work (fiction, picture books, illustration, etc) have been included as a handy reference.

Each biography includes the relevant website, Twitter or Instagram details as a first point of contact. For the more prolific authors and illustrators, the list of works given is a selection only; please visit the relevant websites for full bibliographies.

## KEY TO AGE RANGES

- Under 5
- 5-7
- 7-11
- 11-14
- 14+

- Faridah Àbíké-Íyímídé** ● Fiction
- Dapo Adeola** ● ● ● ● Illustration/Picture Books
- Ade Adepitan** ● Fiction
- Shirin Adl** ● ● ● Illustration/Author-Illustration Books
- John Agard** ● ● ● ● Poetry and Autobiography
- Sav Akyüz** ● ● ● Illustration/Picture Books
- Mahrdokht Amini** ● ● ● Illustration/Picture Books
- Raymond Antrobus** ● ● ● ● ● Fiction and Poetry
- Humza Arshad** ● ● ● Fiction
- Atinuke** ● ● ● Fiction
- Dean Atta** ● ● Fiction and Poetry
- Ruth Awolola** ● ● Poetry
- Yaba Badoe** ● ● Fiction
- Ben Bailey Smith** ● ● ● ● Fiction
- Francesca Beard** ● ● ● ● Fiction and Poetry
- Floella Benjamin** ● ● ● Fiction and Story Picture Books
- Lennox Benson** ● ● Fiction
- Jasbinder Bilan** ● ● Fiction
- Malorie Blackman** ● ● ● ● Fiction
- Jan Blake** ● ● ● Storyteller
- Valerie Bloom** ● ● ● ● ● Fiction and Poetry
- Abdullahi Botan Hassan** ● ● ● ● Fiction and Poetry
- Sita Brahmachari** ● ● Fiction
- Aisha Bushby** ● ● Fiction
- Tanya Byrne** ● ● Fiction
- Sarwat Chadda** ● ● Fiction
- Joseph Coelho** ● ● ● Fiction and Poetry
- Trish Cooke** ● ● ● Fiction

**Alex Falase-Koya** ● Fiction

**Lucy Farfort** ●●● Illustration

**Allen Fatimaharan** ●●● Illustration/Picture Books

**Caleb Femi** ●●● Poetry and Fiction

**Chervelle Fryer** ●●● Illustration

**Parys Gardener** ●●● Illustration

**Jamila Gavin** ●●● Fiction

**Bex Glendining** ●●● Illustration and Graphic Art

**Candy Gourlay** ●●●●● Fiction

**Lorraine Gregory** ●●● Fiction

**Swapna Haddow** ●●● Fiction

**Polly Ho-Yen** ●●●●● Fiction

**Emily Hughes** ●●●●● Illustration/Picture Books

**Sonya Hundal** ●●●●● Plays and Fiction

**Yasmeen Ismail** ●●●●● Illustration and Author-Illustrator Picture Books

**Sharna Jackson** ●●●●● Fiction and Non-Fiction

**Amina Jama** ●●●●● Poetry – see page 24

**Catherine Johnson** ●●●●● Fiction – see page 21

**Nadine Kaadan** ●●●●● Author-Illustrator Fiction and Picture Books

**Savita Kalhan** ●●●●● Fiction

**Peter Kalu** ●●●●● Fiction

**Muhammad Khan** ●●●●● Fiction

**K P Kojo aka Nii Ayikwei Parkes** ●●●●● Fiction and Poetry

**Patrice Lawrence** ●●●●● Fiction

**Errol Lloyd** ●●●●● Illustration and Picture

Books, Fiction and Non-Fiction – see page 15

**John Lyons** ●●●●● Poetry and Illustration

**Nick Makoha** ●●●●● Poetry and Plays

**Ayisha Malik** ●●●●● Fiction

**Irfan Master** ●●●●● Fiction – see page 19

**Taran Matharu** ●●●●● Fiction

**Mei Matsuoka** ●●●●● Illustration/Picture Books

**Tariq Mehmood** ●●●●● Fiction

**Momtaza Mehri** ●●●●● Poetry

**Fatima Mian** ●●●●● Illustration

**Zanib Mian** ●●●●● Fiction

**Kiran Millwood Hargrave** ●●●●● Fiction

**Poonam Mistry** ●●●●● Illustration/Picture Books

**Stefan Mohamed** ●●●●● Fiction and Poetry

**Nick Mohammed** ●●●●● Fiction

**Mique Moriuchi** ●●●●● Illustration/Picture Books

**Millie Murray** ●●●●● Fiction

**Daljit Nagra** ●●●●● Poetry

**Beverly Naidoo** ●●●●● Fiction

**Natasha Ngan** ●●●●● Fiction

**Grace Nichols** ●●●●● Poetry and Fiction

**Karl Nova** ●●●●● Poetry and Fiction

**Tola Okogwu** ●●●●● Fiction

**Shereen Pandit** ●●●●● Fiction and Non-Fiction

**Rikin Parekh** ●●●●● Illustration

**Serena K Patel** ●●●●● Fiction

**Woodrow Phoenix** ●●●●● Illustration and Comics

**Smriti Prasad-Halls** ●●●●● Picture Books, Fiction and Non-Fiction

**Pooja Puri** ●●●●● Fiction

**Yasmin Rahman** ●●●●● Fiction

**Bali Rai** ●●●●● Fiction

**Madhvi Ramani** ●●●●● Fiction

**Ramzee aka Ramsey Hassan** ●●●●● Comics

**Leila Rasheed** ●●●●● Fiction

**Onjali Q Raúf** ●●●●● Fiction

**Na'ima B Robert** ●●●●● Fiction and Non-Fiction

**S F Said** ●●●●● Fiction

**Anjan Sarkar** ●●●●● Illustration/Picture Books

**Emma Shevah** ●●●●● Fiction

**Qian Shi** ●●●●● Author-Illustrator Picture Book

**Nadia Shireen** ●●●●● Author-Illustrator Picture Books

**Nikesh Shukla** ●●●●● Fiction

**Ranjit Singh Dhaliwal** ●●●●● Fiction

**Chitra Soundar** ●●●●● Fiction

**Michael de Souza** ●●●●● Fiction

**Holly Sterling** ●●●●● Illustration/Picture Books

**Tammy Taylor** ●●●●● Illustration/manga art

**Uday Thapa Magar** ●●●●● Illustration

**Kevin Tsang** ●●●●● Fiction

**Ken Wilson-Max** ●●●●● Author-Illustrator Picture Books

**Benjamin Zephaniah** ●●●●● Poetry, Fiction and Non-Fiction

**Jon Daniel** ●●●●● Illustration and Graphic Art



**Faridah Àbíké-Íyímídé**



Faridah Àbíké-Íyímídé is a writer from south London, currently living and studying in north-east Scotland. Her debut novel, *Ace of Spades*, will be published in 2020. Faridah says that, growing up in a poor working-class environment and a childhood riddled with a lot of trauma, she learned to escape through books. She wrote her debut for those who don't fit preconceived notions some people have of black individuals. Faridah says: 'I am a Muslim, I'm queer and I have disabilities and so I wrote a story about black people like me, struggling to survive in a very white world, with my books focusing on systematic racism and how even micro-aggressions eat away at the psyche of black people. I write for black kids who love solving puzzles with hidden meanings. I write for black adults who are still in need of books about people whose struggles they can relate to.'

[www.faridahabikeiyimide.com](http://www.faridahabikeiyimide.com)

[@Abike\\_I](https://twitter.com/Abike_I)

#### Fiction

*Ace of Spades*. London: Usborne Children's Books, 2020. (YA)



**Dapo Adeola**



Dapo Adeola is a British-born Nigerian self-taught illustrator and character designer. His work mostly revolves around creating characters and imagery that challenge gender norms and equality politics in a fun and upbeat manner. He is an avid believer in the importance of representation in the creative arts and raising the profile of Black British illustration talent in UK publishing. He also runs school workshops on the importance of representation in popular media with children from various ethnicities. His goal is to have more BAME faces in normal spaces, instead of the outdated stereotypical spaces and limited forms of representational narratives that currently exist. He makes his literary debut in 2019 with the picture book *Look Up* about a young black girl's fascination with the stars, and a middle grade book, *Last Last-Day-of-Summer*, about two young black male mystery-solving adventurers. Dapo lives in London.

[@dapsdraws](https://twitter.com/dapsdraws)

#### Illustration/Picture Books

*The Last Last-Day-of-Summer*. Written by Lamar Giles. Boston, MA: Versify, 2019. (10-12)

*Look Up*. Written by Nathan Bryon. London: Puffin, 2019. Picture book. (2-5)



**Ade Adepitan**



Having survived polio as a youngster, Ade Adepitan has succeeded as an international Paralympic wheelchair basketball player and has built up a wealth of broadcasting experience. He has travelled the world for his work and regularly goes undercover, investigating controversial and ground-breaking stories. He is a regular reporter for the BBC's *One Show* and a returning presenter for *Children in Need*. Ade has also presented countless sporting events including co-hosting the BAFTA award-winning coverage of the 2012 Paralympics alongside Clare Balding, and the 2016 Invictus Games, created by Prince Harry. Ade's had an incredibly busy 2018 including filming his first four-part documentary for BBC 2 and releasing his first children's book, *Ade's Amazing Ade-ventures: Battle of the Cyborg Cat*. Not to mention getting married at St Paul's Cathedral and refurbishing his entire house! Ade lives in west London.

[www.adeadepitan.com](http://www.adeadepitan.com) / [@AdeAdepitan](https://twitter.com/AdeAdepitan)

#### Fiction

*Ade's Amazing Ade-Ventures: Battle of the Cyborg Cat*. London: Studio Press Publishing, 2018. (7-9)

*Ade's Amazing Ade-Ventures: The Mystery of the Night Spider*. London: Studio Press Publishing, 2019. (7-9)

**Shirin Adl**

Shirin Adl is an Iranian illustrator with a passion for bright colours and interesting textures. When she was little and could only read Farsi, pictures made books in other languages accessible, as she looked at them to work out the story. After she learned English, she sometimes came across a picture book she'd decoded as a child and realised the tale was very different to the one she'd thought of! For Shirin, book illustrations complement the text, but can also tell their own story. She especially enjoys creating busy scenes where she depicts different characters, giving each one an imaginary life; so it makes her very happy when children or parents tell her that they've enjoyed coming up with their own ideas about her pictures. Shirin studied illustration at Loughborough University and lives in Oxford.

[anotherread.com/shirin-adl](http://anotherread.com/shirin-adl)

#### Illustration/Author-Illustration Books

*The Book of Dreams*. London: Frances Lincoln, 2013. (5-8)

*Let's Celebrate! Festival Poems from Around the World*. Chosen by Debjani Chatterjee and Brian D'Arcy. London: Lincoln Children's Books, 2013. (7-10)

*Ramadan Moon*. Written by Na'ima B Robert. London: Frances Lincoln, 2009. (4-7)

*Riding a Donkey Backwards*. Written by Sean Taylor and Khayaal Theatre. Hereford: Otter-Barry Books, 2018. (5+)

*Shahnameh: The Persian Book of Kings*. Written by Elizabeth Laird. London: Lincoln Children's Books, 2014. (7+)

**John Agard**

John Agard was born and educated in Guyana and moved to the UK in 1977. He is one of the poets on the current GCSE curriculum. His collections for young readers include *The Young Inferno*, a teenage spin on Dante's *Inferno*, *Einstein*, *The Girl Who Hated Maths* and *Hello H2O*, both illustrated by Satoshi Kitamura. His adult collections include *Alternative Anthem* and his latest, *Playing the Ghost Of Maimonides*. His first non-fiction, entitled *Book*, tells the history of the book in the voice of the book. His awards include the Casa de las Americas Poetry Prize, the Paul Hamlyn Award and the 2012 Queen's Gold Medal for poetry. He lives in Sussex.

[@JohnAgard1](https://twitter.com/JohnAgard1)

#### Selected Poetry

*All Sorts to Make a World*. Edinburgh: Barrington Stoke, 2014. (7+)

*Book: My Autobiography*. London: Walker Books, 2014. (9-12)

*Come All You Little Persons*. Illustrated by Jessica Courtney Tickle. London: Faber & Faber, 2017. (5+)

*Going Batty*. Illustrated by Michael Broad. Edinburgh: Barrington Stoke, 2016. (7+)

*Goldilocks on CCTV*. Illustrated by Satoshi Kitamura. London: Lincoln Children's, 2014. (7+)

*Hello H2O*. Illustrated by Satoshi Kitamura. London: Hodder Children's, 2013. (6-11)

*The Rainmaker Danced*. Illustrated by Satoshi Kitamura. London: Hodder Children's, 2017. (8+)

*Shona, Word Detective*. Illustrated by Michael Broad. Edinburgh: Barrington Stoke, 2018. (7+)

**Sav Akyüz**

Sav is an acclaimed storyboard artist and children's book illustrator of picture books. With over 15 years of storyboard artistry behind him, Sav has been asked to sketch many things by TV advertising executives. Things that excite (sports, cars, a combination of the two) and those that, perhaps, don't quite hold such glamorous appeal (such as roasted vegetables!). But it hasn't all been Porsches and potatoes — Sav has also served time as a visual effects artist on numerous feature films; enjoyed an unforgettable term at the legendary 'Jim Henson's Creature Shop'; sweated as a cloth layer-upper for famous Brit brands Burberry and Aquascutum; and, perhaps most proudly of all, peddled 99 Flakes and Funny Feet as a wannabe 'Mr Whippy' stationed outside the Tate Britain. He lives in London.

[@splitwigs](https://twitter.com/splitwigs)

#### Illustration/Picture Books

*Bear Moves*. Written by Ben Bailey Smith. London: Walker Entertainment, 2019. (3-7)

*Hip and Hop: You Can Do Anything*. Written by Akala. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017. (3-7)

*I am Bear*. Written by Ben Bailey Smith. London: Walker Entertainment, 2016. (2-5)


**Mehrdokht  
Amini**


Mehrdokht Amini is an Iranian-British children's book illustrator living in London since 2004. She has a degree in graphic design from Tehran University, working for children's magazines and books while still a student. Her picture book, *Golden Domes and Silver Lanterns* written by Hena Khan, was selected for the 2013 ALSC notable children's booklist. In 2016, *Chicken in the Kitchen* won Best Book at the Children's Africana Book Awards, was put on the White Ravens Honour List, and was nominated for the Kate Greenaway Medal. Mehrdokht loves working with publishers who are interested in cultural diversity because it gives her the opportunity to study different cultures and communities, to gain a better understanding and appreciation of all people.

[www.myart2c.com/](http://www.myart2c.com/)

#### Selected Illustration/Picture Books

*Chicken in the Kitchen*. Written by Nnedi Okarafor. London: Lantana Publishing, 2015. (3-7)

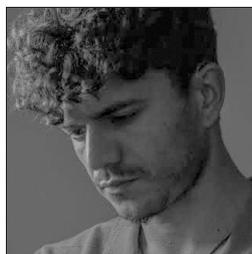
*Crescent Moons and Pointed Minarets: A Muslim Book of Shapes*. Written by Hena Khan. San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 2018. (3-5)

*How the Olympics Came to Be*. Written by Helen East. London: British Museum Press, 2012. (5-7)

*A Moon for Moe and Mo*. Written by Jane Breskin Zalben. Watertown, MA: Charlesbridge Publishing, 2018. (3-7)

*Nimesh the Adventurer*. Written by Ranjit Singh. London: Lantana Publishing, 2018. (3-7)

*Yo Soy Muslim: A Father's Letter to his Daughter*. Written by Mark Gonzales. London: Simon & Schuster, 2017. (4-8)


**Raymond  
Antrobus**


Raymond Antrobus is a poet and freelance teacher based in London. Born in Hackney to an English mother and Jamaican father, he is the author of *Shapes & Disfigurements*, *To Sweeten Bitter* and *The Perseverance* (Poetry Book Society Winter Choice, A *Sunday Times* & *Guardian* Poetry Book of the Year 2018). He is one of the world's first recipients of an MA in spoken word education from Goldsmiths University and is a founding member of Chill Pill and Keats House Poets Forum. His poems have appeared in various magazines and he has performed at festivals in the UK and abroad. His poetry has appeared in *The Big Issue*, the *Jamaica Gleaner*, the *Guardian* and at Tedx EastEnd. Raymond's first children's picture book is *Bears Can Ski*, illustrated by Polly Dunbar, due out in late 2019. It is about a boy bear and his father trying to understand and manage deafness.

[www.raymondantrobus.com](http://www.raymondantrobus.com)

#### Fiction and Poetry

*Bears Can Ski*. Illustrated by Polly Dunbar. London: Walker Books, 2019. Picture book (3+)

*The Perseverance*. London: Penned in the Margins, 2018. Poetry (14+)

*Shapes & Disfigurements*. Burning Eye Books, 2013. Poetry (14+)

*To Sweeten Bitter*. London: Out-spoken Press, 2017. Poetry (14+)


**Humza Arshad**


Humza Arshad is one of the UK's most popular and important British Asian personalities. After graduating from Richmond Drama School, Arshad wrote, directed and edited an episode called *Diary of a Badman*. Over 90 million views of the series later, Humza became the first British YouTuber to have his own scripted comedy series on BBC Three in the mockumentary series *Coconut*. Equally important to Humza has been using his influence and comedy for a greater purpose. In 2015, Humza partnered with the UK Counter Terrorism Unit and he is YouTube's first ambassador for the Creators For Change campaign. Humza has spoken and shared the stage with the likes of Will Smith, YouTube CEO Susan Wojcicki, Kevin Hart and Whoopi Goldberg. *Little Badman and the Invasion of the Killer Aunties* is his debut children's book. Humza is based in London.

[@humzaproduction](https://www.instagram.com/humzaproduction)

#### Fiction

*Little Badman and the Invasion of the Killer Aunties*. Co-authored with Henry White. London: Puffin, 2018. (9+)

**Atinuke**

Atinuke was born and grew up in Nigeria. She writes children's books because she loves the vibrancy, joy, wisdom and humour of her own African culture, which she includes a lot of in her work. She shares with children all over the world how modern life is in Africa, how amazing African traditions and cultures are, and how our human joys and sorrows are the same. She also tells traditional African stories which make her international audiences laugh and cry. Her books have been published in the UK, USA, France and Japan and have won lots of awards. Atinuke spends most of her time at home quietly dreaming up stories, but she sometimes visits schools and book festivals — she loves to meet her readers! Atinuke lives in Pembrokeshire.

[atinuke-author.weebly.com/](http://atinuke-author.weebly.com/)

#### **Selected Fiction**

The *Anna Hibiscus* series (7 books). Illustrated by Lauren Tobia. London: Walker Books, 2007-2015. (3+/7+)

*B is for Baby*. Illustrated by Angela Brooksbank. London: Walker Books, 2019. (3+)

*Baby Goes To Market*. Illustrated by Angela Brooksbank. London: Walker Books, 2017. (3+)

*The No.1 Car Spotter* series (4 books). Illustrated by Warwick Johnson Cadwell. London: Walker Books, 2010-2016. (7+)

**Dean Atta**

Dean was shortlisted for the Polari First Book Prize for his debut poetry collection, *I Am Nobody's Nigger*. His poems deal with themes of race, gender, identity and growing up, and have appeared on BBC 1, BBC Radio 4, BBC World Service and Channel 4. Dean was named as one of the most influential LGBT people in the UK by the *Independent on Sunday*. He regularly performs across the UK and internationally and is a member of Keats House Poets Forum and Malika's Poetry Kitchen. He has a Philosophy and English BA from the University of Sussex and a Writer/Teacher MA from Goldsmiths, University of London. Dean is a Tutor for Poetry School and a Writer in Residence for First Story. His debut young adult novel, *The Black Flamingo*, will be published in August 2019. Dean lives in London.

[sites.google.com/site/deanatta/about](https://sites.google.com/site/deanatta/about)

[@DeanAtta](https://www.instagram.com/DeanAtta)

#### **Fiction**

Story in *Proud*. Compiled by Juno Dawson. London: Stripes Publishing, 2019. (12+)

*The Black Flamingo*. London: Hodder Children's Books, 2019. Novel. (12+)

**Ruth Awolola**

Ruth Awolola is a British-born Nigerian-Jamaican student, youth worker and poet currently based in York, having moved from south-east London to study English in education. Themes of love, race, family and space feature heavily in her work, as she aims to understand herself, her history, her interests and potentially her future. She writes for everyone, those who can relate to her experiences and those who cannot. When she began writing poetry in 2015 at 16 years old, she found that it was the perfect way for her to express her understanding of the world, the things she felt, loved, admired and desired. She produces poetry for a range of ages, asking herself 'What did I need to hear when I was younger? What did I care about then? What do I care about now? What will I go on to care about?'

[@r\\_awolola](https://www.instagram.com/r_awolola)

#### **Poetry appears in:**

*A Heartful of Fist: A SLAMBassadors Anthology 2016*. London: OutSpoken Press, 2016. (16+)

*Rising Stars: New Young Voices in Poetry*. Hereford: Otter-Barry Books, 2017. (10+)

*She is Fierce: Brave, Bold and Beautiful Poems by Women*. Edited by Ana Sampson. London: Macmillan's Children's Books, 2018. (11+)

**Yaba Badoe**

Yaba Badoe is an award-winning Ghanaian-British documentary filmmaker and writer. A graduate of King's College Cambridge, she has taught in Spain, Jamaica and Ghana. Her short stories for adults have been published in *Critical Quarterly* and in *African Love Stories: An Anthology*, edited by Ama Ata Aidoo. In 2014 Yaba was nominated for the Distinguished Woman of African Cinema award. Her debut novel, *A Jigsaw of Fire and Stars*, published by Zephyr, was shortlisted for the Branford Boase Award 2018 and has been nominated for the 2019 Carnegie Medal. Yaba is based in London.

[@yaba\\_badoe](#)

#### Fiction

*A Jigsaw of Fire and Stars*. London: Zephyr, 2017. (12+)

*The Secret of the Purple Lake*. Illustrated by Gbolahan Adams. London: Cassava Republic, 2017. (10-13)

*True Murder*. London: Jonathan Cape, 2009. (Adults)

*Wolf-Light*. London: Zephyr, 2019. (12+)

**Ben Bailey Smith**

Once an underground rapper, in 2010 Ben Bailey Smith created the double BAFTA winning CBBC television series *4 O'clock Club*, which combines razor sharp rhymes and laugh-out-loud comedy. It filmed its ninth season in 2018. He has appeared on *Blue Peter*, both as a performer and a contributor to their reviews of children's literature, and has been a storyteller on CBeebies' *Bedtime Stories*. In 2016 he contributed to Sky's countdown of the nation's favourite Roald Dahl books and in 2017 made an unforgettable cameo in the Sky One adaptation of the David Walliams' bestselling children's novel *Ratburger*. In 2016, Ben released his first children's book, *I Am Bear*, the follow up, *Bear Moves*, is just out. He's currently writing a young adult play for the National Theatre's Connections programme. His latest work is a comic tale of the school run entitled *Get a Move On!*, aimed at 5-8 year olds. Ben lives in London.

[docbrown.co.uk](#)

#### Fiction

*I am Bear*. Illustrated by Sav Akyuz. London: Walker Entertainment, 2016. (2-5)

*Bear Moves*. Illustrated by Sav Akyuz. London: Walker Entertainment, 2019. (3-7)

**Francesca Beard**

Francesca Beard was born in Malaysia and grew up on an island balanced on the equator, surrounded by eagles, lizards, cobras and a fighting cockerel for a guard dog. Her best friend was Fluffy, a smooth-haired mongrel. After a spell in real jobs, she now exists as a London-based poet who has been called 'the Queen of British performance poetry' (London *Metro*) and 'spine-tingling' (*The Independent*). She has performed her poetry in all sorts of places, all over the world, from a shopping mall in the Bangkok Book Fair to a prison in Colombia, to New York's Nuyorican Café and run creative writing workshops with The British Library, The Young Vic, The BBC, Hampton Court Palace, The Natural History Museum and many more.

[@FrancescaBeard](#)

#### Selected Poetry and Fiction appear in:

*Kin: New Fiction by Black and Asian Women*. Ed. Karen McCarthy. London: Serpent's Tail, 2003. (14+)

*Michael Rosen's A-Z: The best children's poetry from Agard to Zephaniah*. London: Puffin 2009. (7-11)

*The Poetry Store*. Compiled by Paul Cookson. London: Hodder Children's Books, 2005. (6-11)

*She is Fierce: Brave, Bold and Beautiful Poems by Women*. Ed. Ana Sampson. London: Pan Macmillan, 2018. (10+)

*Velocity: The Best of Apples & Snakes*. Ed. Maja Prausnitz. London: Black Spring Press, 2003. (14+)

*Westside Storeys*. Ed. Dotun Adebayo. London: The Xpress, 2003. (14+)



**Floella  
Benjamin**



Baroness Floella Benjamin was born in Trinidad in 1949 and came to England in 1960. She left school at 16, aiming to become Britain's first black female bank manager, but instead became an actress, presenter, writer, producer, working peer and an active advocate for the welfare, care and education of children. She has appeared on stage, film, radio and television; she has also headed a successful film and television production company for 28 years. Floella's broadcasting work has been recognised with numerous awards, including an OBE in 2000, a Special Lifetime Achievement BAFTA Award in 2005 and the J M Barrie Lifetime Award in 2012 for her lasting cultural legacy. She has written 30+ books including *Coming to England*, which was adapted into a Royal Television Society award-winning BBC film.

[www.floellabenjamin.com/](http://www.floellabenjamin.com/)

#### **Selected Fiction/Story Picture Books**

*Coming to England*. London: Walker Books, 2009. (11+)

*My Two Grannies*. Illustrated by Margaret Chamberlain. London: Frances Lincoln Children's Books, 2009. (5-8)

*Sea of Tears*. London: Frances Lincoln Children's Books, 2011. (11+)

*Skip Across the Ocean*. Illustrated by Shelia Moxley. London: Frances Lincoln Children's Books, 1998. (5-8)

*Snotty and the Rod of Power*. Illustrated by Francis Mosley. Oxford: Heinemann, 1987. (9+)

*Why the Agouti Has no Tail and Other Stories*. Oxford: Nelson Thornes Ltd, 1988. (11+)



**Lennox  
Benson**



Lennox Benson is a first-time author from London. He was born to a doctor and education consultant in Lagos, Nigeria and migrated to London at the age of two. He was gifted many books and graphic novels from his parents and became a keen reader. At school he excelled in art and creative writing and nurtured a dream to write a book of his own one day. After working with a number of mentors in the performing and creative arts, Lennox finally wrote *The Biracial Butterfly* as an educational tool for children to learn about mixed heritage and modern families.

[@lennox\\_benson](https://twitter.com/lennox_benson)

#### **Fiction**

*The Biracial Butterfly*. Illustrated by Hari Conner. Manchester: Dog Horn Publishing, 2018. (4+)



**Jasbinder  
Bilan**



According to family stories, Jasbinder was born in a stable close to the foothills of the Himalayas. Until she was a year and a half, she lived on a farm inhabited by a grumpy camel and a monkey called Oma. Her family moved from India to Nottingham, which was a dramatic change, moving from the countryside to a city, but the memories of India were kept alive through the stories shared at big family gatherings. This is where her love for stories began. Jasbinder graduated from Bath Spa University with an MA in creative writing for young people, where the seeds of her fiction were nurtured. The incredible bond with her grandmother was the inspiration for her first book, *Asha and the Spirit Bird*, which won *The Times* Chickenhouse Prize for Fiction 2017. Jasbinder is based in Bath.

[jasbinderbilan.co.uk](http://jasbinderbilan.co.uk)

[@jasinbath](https://twitter.com/jasinbath)

#### **Fiction**

*Asha and the Spirit Bird*. Frome, Somerset: Chicken House, 2019. (9-12)



**Malorie  
Blackman**



Malorie Blackman has written over 60 books for children and young adults. Her work has been adapted for TV, with the six-part adaptation of *Pig-Heart Boy* winning a BAFTA. *Noughts & Crosses* is in production for the BBC and a stage adaptation by Pilot Theatre will tour from February 2019, adapted by Sabrina Mahfouz. In 2005, Malorie was honoured with the Eleanor Farjeon Award in recognition of her distinguished contribution to the world of children's books. In 2008 she received an OBE for her services to children's literature and from 2013-15 she was the Children's Laureate. Malorie co-wrote *Rosa*, an episode in series 11 of *Doctor Who*. *Crossfire*, the fifth novel in her *Noughts & Crosses* series, will be published in 2019. Malorie lives in Kent.

[www.malorieblackman.co.uk](http://www.malorieblackman.co.uk)

@malorieblackman

#### Selected Fiction

*Betsey Biggalow* series (5 books). London: Red Fox, 2014. (5-7)

*Boys Don't Cry*. London: Corgi, 2011. (YA)

*Chasing the Stars*. London: Penguin, 2017. (YA)

*Fangs*. London: Tamarind, 2015. (7-9)

*Girl Wonder* series (3 books). London: Tamarind, 2014. (7-9)

*I Want a Cuddle*. Illustrated by Joanne Partis. London: Orchard Books, 2014. (6-11)

*Noughts & Crosses* series (5 books). London: Penguin, 2001-2019. (YA)

*Peacemaker*. Edinburgh: Barrington Stoke, 2016. (YA)

*Pig-Heart Boy*. London: Corgi, 2004. (9-11)



**Jan Blake**



Jan Blake is one of the UK's leading storytellers and has been performing worldwide for over 30 years. Specialising in stories from Africa and the Caribbean, she has a well-earned reputation for dynamic and generous storytelling. Highlights include being resident storyteller at the Hay Festival, curating *Shakespeare's Stories*, in conjunction with the Royal Shakespeare Company and the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust, and touring the award-winning *The Old Woman, the Buffalo, and the Lion of Manding* about the Malian hero king Sundiata Keita. As well as regularly storytelling to children in school settings, she works with teachers to help them become better storytellers in the classroom. *In the Winter Wood*, inspired by winter stories from around the world, was commissioned by Polka Theatre and Apples and Snakes and premiered in 2018.

[www.janblakestories.co.uk](http://www.janblakestories.co.uk)

@akuajan



**Valerie Bloom**



Valerie Bloom is the prize-winning author of poetry for adults and children; picture books, pre-teen and teenage novels and stories for children. She has presented poetry programmes for the BBC among others. Her poetry has been featured by Poems on the Underground; included on school courses in the UK (GCSE), the Caribbean and Malaysia; and published in over 500 anthologies worldwide. She lives in Kent and performs her work and runs writing workshops in primary and secondary schools, libraries and universities around the world. Valerie Bloom is the winner of *The Voice* Community Award for Literature, has been awarded an Honorary Masters Degree from the University of Kent and received an MBE in 2008.

[valeriebloom.co.uk](http://valeriebloom.co.uk)

#### Selected Poetry and Fiction

*Ackee, Breadfruit, Callaloo*. Illustrated by Kim Harley. London: Bogle-L'Ouverture, 1999. Picture book. (0-5)

*Duppy Jamboree: And Other Jamaican Poems*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992. (4-6)

*Hot Like Fire and Other Poems*. Illustrated by Debbie Lush. London: Bloomsbury, 2009. (9-11)

*Jaws and Claws and Things with Wings*. Illustrated by Matt Robertson. London: Collins, 2013. (8-9)

*Let Me Touch the Sky*. West Yorkshire: Caboodle Books, 2008. (9+)

*Mighty Mountains, Swirling Seas*. Illustrated by Alessandra Cimatoribus. London: Collins, 2015. (6-8)

*The Tribe*. London: Macmillan, 2008. (YA)



**Abdullahi  
Botan Hassan**



Abdullahi Botan Hassan is a Somali poet, writer and researcher. He came to London as a refugee in 1998 and writes poems based on his experiences in Britain. In 2003 he founded Soohan Somali Arts, which works with Somali children in primary schools in Camden. In 2012 he was selected to represent Somalia in the Cultural Olympiad's week-long Poetry Parnassus at the Southbank Centre, London, which brought together one poet from every Olympic nation. Abdullahi plays a unique and crucial role in continuing Somali oral traditions in the diaspora, adapting traditional poetic forms to make them relevant and engaging to Somalis and the wider community. From 2009-12, he recorded his vast poetic repertoire which is now archived at the British Library. He translated Shakespeare's 'Sonnet XII' for the Globe Theatre's Sonnet Sunday in 2012. His poems have appeared in international anthologies and have been translated into English, Arabic and Turkish.

**@AbdullahiBotan**

**Poetry appears in:**

*Modern Poetry in Translation* magazine. Special Issue – 'Parnassus'. 2012.

*The Red Anthology*. Leeds: Peepal Tree Press, 2010. (adult)

*The World Record: International Voices from Southbank Centre's Poetry Parnassus*. Ed. Anna Selby and Neil Astley. Northumberland: Bloodaxe Books, 2012. (adult)



**Sita  
Brahmachari**



Sita Brahmachari is a multi-award-winning writer of novels, plays, novellas and short stories. Sita's first novel, *Artichoke Hearts*, won the Waterstones Children's Book Award and was voted in the *Guardian's* top 50 books celebrating diversity since the 1950s. Her subsequent Carnegie-nominated novels are: *Jasmine Skies*, *Red Leaves*, *Tender Earth*, *Worry Angels* and *Zebra Crossing Soul Song*. *Kite Spirit* was nominated for the UKLA book award. Sita's latest illustrated novella is *Corey's Rock*. She has been writer-in residence for BookTrust, is an Amnesty International Ambassador and speaks in schools, at festivals and conferences. In 2018 *Tender Earth* received the UK Honour from the International Board of Books for Young People. Sita is based in London.

**@SitaBrahmachari**

**Fiction**

*Artichoke Hearts*. London, Macmillan, 2011. (9+)

*Brace Mouth, False Teeth*. Edinburgh: Barrington Stoke, 2014. (11+)

*Car Wash Wish*. Edinburgh: Barrington Stoke, 2016. (11+)

*Corey's Rock*. Illustrated by Jane Ray. Hereford: Otter-Barry Books, 2018. (9+)

*Jasmine Skies*. London, Macmillan, 2017. (11+)

*Kite Spirit*. London, Macmillan, 2013. (9+)

*Red Leaves*. London, Macmillan, 2014 (9+)

*Tender Earth*. London, Macmillan, 2017. (9+)

*Worry Angels*. Edinburgh: Barrington Stoke, 2017. (11+)

*Zebra Crossing Soul Song*. Edinburgh: Barrington Stoke, 2018. (11+)



**Aisha Bushby**



Aisha Bushby was born in the Middle East and has lived in Kuwait, England and Canada. She now lives in Lincolnshire. The first novel she ever worked on was a piece of *Harry Potter* fan fiction titled *Harry Potter and the final Horcrux*. Her first published work was a young adult short story, 'Marionette Girl', where she explored the effects of obsessive-compulsive disorder on teenagers. She now writes middle-grade books which sometimes tackle heavy themes, but she hopes she always does this with humour, heart and a sprinkling of magic. Her debut, *A Pocketful of Stars*, is out in 2019 and explores friendship, family and finding your place in the world.

**@aishabushby**

**Fiction**

'Marionette Girl' in *A Change is Gonna Come* anthology. London: Stripes Publishing 2017. (YA)

*A Pocketful of Stars*. London: Egmont, 2019. (YA)


**Tanya Byrne**


Tanya Byrne was born in London and studied in Surrey, where she still lives with her cat who goes by several names, none of which he actually answers to. After eight years working for BBC radio, she left to write her debut novel, *Heart-Shaped Bruise*, which was published in 2012. She has a weakness for boys with guitars, drinks far too much tea and, even though her mother tells her not to, she always talks to strangers. *Follow Me Down* was published in 2013, and Tanya's third novel, *For Holly*, was published in 2015. She was included in the 2017 poetry and fiction collection *A Change is Gonna Come*, and was also one of the seven authors of *Floored*, a collaborative novel published in 2018. Tanya has also written for the *Guardian* and *The Pool*.

[tanyabyrne.com/](http://tanyabyrne.com/)

#### Fiction

Short story in *A Change is Gonna Come*. London: Stripes Publishing, 2017. (YA)

*Floored: When Seven Lives Collide*. A collaborative novel by Sara Barnard, Holly Bourne, Tanya Byrne, Non Pratt, Melinda Salisbury, Lisa Williamson and Eleanor Wood. London: Macmillan's Children's Books, 2017. (YA)

*Follow Me Down*. London: Headline, 2013. (YA)

*For Holly*. London: Headline, 2015. (YA)

*Heart Shaped Bruise*. London: Headline, 2012. (YA)

Short story in *Proud*. Curated by Juno Dawson. London: Stripes Publishing, 2019. (YA)


**Sarwat Chadda**


Sarwat Chadda has been published for a decade now, and in over a dozen languages. He's written urban fantasy for young adults, big mythologies, trilogies and, most recently, the epic *Shadow Magic* fantasy series under the pseudonym of Joshua Khan. Sarwat's tastes are Eastern-orientated. London-born and coming from a south Asian Muslim background, he is keen to explore the stories and mythologies of his heritage. The *Ash Mistry* series was inspired by his trips to India and his love for its stories, and he has adapted the *Mahabharata* in graphic novel form. Sarwat is based in south London.

[@sarwatchadda](https://twitter.com/sarwatchadda)

#### Selected Fiction

The *Ash Mistry* series (3 books). London: HarperCollins Children's Books, 2012-13. (9+)

*Burning Magic*. Written as Joshua Khan. New York: Disney-Hyperion, 2018. (8+)

*Dark Goddess*. London: Penguin, 2009. (11+)

*Devil's Kiss*. London: Puffin, 2009. (11+)

*Dream Magic*. Written as Joshua Khan. Witney, Oxon: Scholastic, 2017. (10+)

*Fall of the Beasts 8: The Dragon's Eye (Spirit Animals)*. Witney, Oxon: Scholastic, 2018. (9+)

*Mission Atomic: The 39 Clues (Doublecross book 4)*. Witney, Oxon: Scholastic, 2018. (8+)

*Shadow Magic*. Written as Joshua Khan. Witney, Oxon: Scholastic, 2016. (10+)


**Joseph Coelho**


Joseph Coelho is an award-winning children's author, performance poet and playwright based in London. His debut poetry collection, *Werewolf Club Rules*, was the 2015 winner of the CLPE CLIPPA Poetry Award. His second book, *Overheard in a Tower Block*, was shortlisted for the 2018 CLPE CLIPPA Poetry Award and is longlisted for the 2019 UKLA Book Awards. Joseph features in the BBC Teach 'Understanding Poetry' online series. His work has poetry and performance at its heart, drawing on over 16 years' experience running dynamic creative literacy sessions in schools. He aims to inspire young people through stories and characters they can recognise.

[www.thepoetryofjosephcoelho.com](http://www.thepoetryofjosephcoelho.com)

[@poetryjoe](https://twitter.com/poetryjoe)

#### Poetry and Fiction

*Grandpa's Stories*. Illustrated by Allison Colpoys. New York: Abram's Books, 2019. (4-8)

*How to Write Poems*. Illustrated by Matt Robertson. London: Bloomsbury, 2017. (7-9)

*If All the World Were...* Illustrated by Allison Colpoys. London: Lincoln Children's, 2018. (7-9)

*Luna Loves Library Day*. Illustrated by Fiona Lumbers. London: Andersen Press, 2018. (2-5)

*No Longer Alone*. Illustrated by Robyn Wilson-Owen. London: Egmont, 2019. (3+)

*Overheard in a Tower Block*. Illustrated by Kate Milner. Hereford: Otter-Barry Books, 2017. (9+)

*Werewolf Club Rules!* London: Lincoln Children's Books, 2014. (7-11)

*A Year of Nature Poems*. London: Wide Eyed Editions, 2019. (9-12)

**Trish Cooke**

Former children's TV presenter Trish Cooke is an Olivier nominated playwright. She writes for theatre, TV, film and radio and is a multi-award-winning children's author. Born and still living in Bradford, Trish's parents are from Dominica. Frustrated by the lack of roles for black women, Trish began writing plays she could act in herself. Similarly, when she had her first child, the lack of black characters in children's books drove her to create stories with black children in them. Her most popular children's book, *So Much*, was voted one of the 100 Best Children's Books in 2016 by *Time Out*. It won the Smarties Book Prize and the W H Smith Award among others. In 2009, *So Much* was included in the National Strategy good practice publication on raising achievement of Caribbean children at foundation stage.

[www.trishcooke.co.uk](http://www.trishcooke.co.uk)

#### Selected Fiction

*The Diary of a Young West Indian Immigrant*.

London: Franklin Watts, 2001. (8-13)

*Hoorah for Mary Seacole*. Illustrated by Anni Axworthy. London: Franklin Watts, 2008. (4-6)

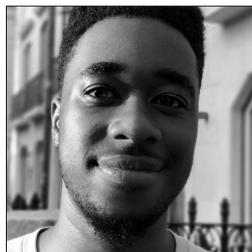
*King Kafu and the Moon*. Illustrated by Andrea Castellani. London: Pearson, 2015. (6-8)

*Look Back*. Illustrated by Caroline Binch. London: Papillote Press, 2013. (4-9)

*So Much*. Illustrated by Helen Oxenbury. London: Walker Books, 2008. (0-7)

*Tales From the Caribbean*. London: Puffin, 2017. (8-12)

*Zoom*. Illustrated by Alex Ayliffe. London: Harper Collins, 2015. (2-6)

**Alex Falase-Koya**

Alex Falase-Koya is a London native and winner of the London Writers Awards for Young Adult/children's fiction run by Spread the Word. He graduated from Middlesex University with a computer science degree, and now works as a technical support engineer in Old Street. Alex has been reading and writing since he was a teenager and anything at the cross-section of social commentary and genre fiction floats his boat. He is currently working on *The Thursday Club*, a YA novel manuscript which he describes as being 'a cross between *Brick*, *The Breakfast Club* and cosmic horror'. When he's not writing, he's baking apple crumbles or playing video games. Alex now lives in Hackney with his girlfriend and hopes to soon welcome a cat into his life.

[@alexiswriter](https://twitter.com/alexiswriter)

**Lucy Farfort**

Lucy Farfort is an illustrator and aspiring writer based in Newcastle. She has worked for a variety of clients and illustrated books for number of self-published authors. She is passionate about the need for more diversity across the board in children's publishing. In 2016 Lucy was a finalist in the Society of Children's Book Writers and Illustrators' Undiscovered Voices competition; and in 2017 she was awarded first prize for illustration in Faber Children's inaugural FAB Prize competition. Lucy particularly enjoys working in watercolour and experimenting with pattern and texture. Her illustrations incorporate both traditional and digital media. Lucy is represented by Madeleine Milburn Agency and one of her picture books – a taboo-busting adventure story – is currently out on submission.

[www.lucyfarfort.co.uk](http://www.lucyfarfort.co.uk)

[@lucyfarfort](https://twitter.com/lucyfarfort)



**Allen  
Fatimaharan**



Allen Fatimaharan is a freelance illustrator and animator based in Oxford. He illustrates picture books and comics, written alone or in collaboration with other authors. He creates surreal stories, taking inspiration from his drawings of Oxford and its diverse inhabitants. Allen completed an undergraduate course in illustration and animation from Kingston University then, following a stint working in publishing and marketing, he completed a masters in character animation from Central Saint Martins in London, graduating in 2017. As part of his day job he directs animated infomercials for institutions and businesses such as the University of the Arts London and the English National Opera. He is currently finishing work on his first picture book, *My Hair*, written by Hannah Lee.

[allenfatimaharan.carbonmade.com/](http://allenfatimaharan.carbonmade.com/)

[@allen\\_fatimaharan](https://twitter.com/allen_fatimaharan)

#### Illustration/Picture Books

*My Hair*. Written by Hannah Lee. London: Faber and Faber Children's Books, 2019. (5-7)



**Caleb Femi**



Caleb Femi is a poet from south London. He has written poems commissioned by Tate Modern, The Royal Society for Literature, St Paul's Cathedral, the BBC, the *Guardian* and many more. From 2016 to 2018, Caleb was the Young People's Laureate for London, working with young people on a city, national and global level. He is a two-time TEDx speaker, and has delivered guest lectures at both Oxford and Cambridge and other UK universities. As a film director, Caleb has written and directed short films for the BBC and Channel 4. He is also featured in the *Dazed* 100 list of the next generation shaping youth culture. Recent commissions include a short story for the BBC's CBeebies Storytime App.

[www.calebfemi.com](http://www.calebfemi.com)

[@CalebFemi5](https://twitter.com/CalebFemi5)



**Chervelle  
Fryer**



Chervelle is a full-time illustrator from Cardiff, Wales — the land of sheep, dragons and rain. At the creative agency Jelly London, she works on publications, editorial, advertising and children's books, drawing inspiration from nature, emotions and natural materials. Chervelle has worked with Fortnum & Mason, Tesco and TFL and has completed two children's books. Her first commissioned book has a very strong message about plastic waste and the seas. *Pippa the Queen of the Ocean* was the world's first book to be made from recycled plastic pulled from the ocean and is a beautiful bright book. The colours are meant to be jarring, very much like the bright plastic you see in the supermarkets. Her second book, *Bones*, is educational and looks at the anatomy of animals. Chervelle says she learned a lot about the inside of animals and maths, as there was a lot of counting bones and vertebrate!

[chervelle.co.uk](http://chervelle.co.uk)

[@chervellefryer](https://twitter.com/chervellefryer)

#### Illustration

*Bones*. By Jules Howard. London: 20 Watt, 2018. (7+)

*How Pippa Became the Queen of the Ocean*. WFO/Teijin, 2017. <http://theoceanplasticbook.com/> (7+)



**Parys  
Gardener**



Bristol's Parys Gardener is a digital illustrator from a British Caribbean background specialising in editorial illustration. With a BA in illustration and visual communications from the University of Westminster (2017), her work mainly explores the portrayal of women of colour, particularly black women, as active characters in a range of narratives, from the heroic to the everyday. She aims to reclaim the voices and visual representation of marginalised communities through popular culture where their stories are often overlooked or burdened with tropes and stereotypes. Her visual vocabulary explores pop art techniques, utilising block colour, tone and pattern across digital media. She often takes inspiration from her own background: 'I'm massively inspired by the strength and legacies of my grandmothers, who were part of the Windrush generation. The more I learn about their lives, the more I'm inspired to place women of misrepresented backgrounds as the centrepieces in their own narratives.'

[www.parysgardener.com/](http://www.parysgardener.com/)



**Jamila Gavin**



Jamila Gavin was born in Mussoorie, India, to an Indian father and an English mother. The family settled in England where Jamila completed her schooling, studied music, worked for the BBC and became a mother of two. She began writing to reflect the multicultural world in which she and her children lived. Her first book, *The Magic Orange Tree* was published in 1979. Other publications include: *Grandpa Chatterji* (shortlisted for the Smarties Award and dramatised for Channel 4 schools TV); and *The Wheel of Surya* (1992 *Guardian* Children's Fiction Award runner-up). Her novel for young adults, *Coram Boy*, was published to critical acclaim in 2000 and won the Children's Whitbread Award. Her latest publication is a collection of brand new fairy tales, *Blackberry Blue*. Jamila lives in Gloucestershire.

[www.jamilagavin.co.uk](http://www.jamilagavin.co.uk)

#### **Selected Fiction**

*Blackberry Blue and Other Fairy Tales*. London: Tamarind, 2013. (9-11)

*Coram Boy*. London: Mammoth, 2000. (11+)

*Grandpa Chatterji*. Illustrated by Mei-Yim Low. London: Methuen Children's Books, 1993. (7+)

*Out of India: Walking On My Hands*. London: Hodder Children's Books, 2007. (7-11)

*The Robber Baron's Daughter*. London: Egmont, 2008. (11-14)

The *Surya* trilogy (3 books). London: Methuen Children's Books, 1992-1997. (11-14)

*Tales from India - Stories of Creation and the Cosmos*. Illustrated by Amanda Hall. London: Templar Publishing, 2011. (9-12)



**Bex  
Glendining**



Bex (Becky) Glendining (she/they) is a freelance illustrator, comic colourist and graphic designer based in Kent. A recent graduate of Canterbury Christ Church University with a degree in graphic design, Bex has continued to study through a Masters by Research which aims to highlight the discrimination and experiences of women of colour within UK tattoo culture. Through a sense of softness and peace, their illustration work captures the spaces we call home and places that bring comfort. While their main focus is digital art, Bex loves to paint and embroider, and that work has been part of several exhibitions at the Sidney Cooper Gallery. Bex is also developing their original story, 'Pink Skies', an illustrated slice of life series which captures the life of Baptiste Pariseau, and is for any LGBTQ+ people or people of colour looking to be a little less alone and to see a part of themselves.

[@thesis](https://twitter.com/thesis)

#### **Illustration and Graphic Art**

*Arcade Tales #2*. 2016. (16 +)

*Faerie Fire, a 5e Supplemental*. Astrolago Press, 2018. (YA)

*Mix & Match: Exploring Contemporary Collage*. Collected by Sandu. USA: Gingko Press, 2017. (YA)

**Candy Gourlay**

Growing up in the Philippines, Candy Gourlay wondered why the books she loved only featured pink-skinned children living in snow-covered worlds, totally unlike her steamy, tropical Manila home. As a result, it took her years to become an author and to see her Filipino stories in the pages of books. Her latest novel *Bone Talk* has received glowing reviews. It is set in a historical moment in the Philippines when headhunting tribes first came face to face with American invading forces. She has published her first picture book, *Is It a Mermaid*, set on an idyllic white sand island typical of the Philippines, with a heartfelt eco message. Candy's novels for young readers, *Tall Story* and *Shine*, have been listed for many prizes such as the Carnegie Medal and the *Guardian* Children's Book Prize. Both novels won the Crystal Kite Prize for Europe. She lives in London with her family.

[www.candygourlay.com/](http://www.candygourlay.com/)

#### Fiction

*Bone Talk*. Oxford: David Fickling Books, 2018. (YA)  
*Is It A Mermaid?* Illustrated by Francesca Chessa. Hereford: Otter-Barry Books, 2018. (3-6)  
*Shine*. Oxford: David Fickling Books, 2013. (9-11)  
*Tall Story*. Oxford: David Fickling Books, 2011. (9-11)

**Lorraine Gregory**

Lorraine Gregory was raised on a council estate in east London by an Austrian mother and an Indian father. Her love of reading and wild imagination led to years of making up stories but none of them made it to the page until she began writing them down for her son. Her debut children's novel, *Mold and the Poison Plot*, was released in 2017 and won the SCBWI Crystal Kite award for UK and Ireland in 2018. Her second book, *The Maker of Monsters*, will be published in May 2019. Both fantasy adventures have strong themes of diversity, inclusivity and friendship tucked within the pages. Lorraine is also part of the duo who set up and run the popular bi-monthly #ukmgchat on Twitter, which allows authors, agents, publishers and general book lovers the opportunity to discuss the joy of children's books in detail. She lives in Loughton, Essex.

[lorrainegregoryauthor.co.uk/](http://lorrainegregoryauthor.co.uk/)

#### Fiction

*The Maker of Monsters*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019. (8+)  
*Mold and the Poison Plot*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017. (8+)

**Swapna Haddow**

Londoner Swapna Haddow is the award-winning children's author of the *Dave Pigeon* series. She loves to write about boisterous animals that cause mayhem and is working to make sure mean cats, grizzly bears and big-hearted little rabbits find their place on the bookshelves. Friendship and humour are always at the heart of what Swapna loves to write. Her first published book, *Dave Pigeon*, illustrated by Sheena Dempsey, received rave reviews and went on to win three regional awards in the UK and was shortlisted for the prestigious Sainsbury's Children's Book Award. The series is based on two pigeons who find themselves battling predators in an array of madcap scenarios, all the while proving that friendship and teamwork can defeat anything. Swapna now lives in New Zealand with her husband, son and their dog, Archie.

[swapnahaddow.co.uk/](http://swapnahaddow.co.uk/)

#### Fiction

*Dave Pigeon*. Illustrated by Sheena Dempsey. London: Faber & Faber, 2016. (5+)  
*Dave Pigeon (Nuggets!)*. Illustrated by Sheena Dempsey. London: Faber & Faber, 2017. (5+)  
*Dave Pigeon (Racer!)*. Illustrated by Sheena Dempsey. London: Faber & Faber, 2018. (5+)  
*Dave Pigeon (Royal Coo!)*. Illustrated by Sheena Dempsey. London: Faber & Faber, 2019. (5+)  
*Little Rabbit's Big Surprise*. Illustrated by Alison Friend. London: Little Tiger Press, 2019. (3+)

**Polly Ho-Yen**

Polly Ho-Yen is a writer based in Bristol. Her debut novel, *Boy in the Tower*, was shortlisted for the *Blue Peter* Book Award, Waterstones Children's Book Prize and the Federation of Children's Book Groups Book Award. All three of her middle-grade novels have been nominated for the Carnegie Medal. Following her experiences working as a primary school teacher in south London, Polly puts these places and communities centre-stage in her narratives. She aims to create stories firmly rooted in a world that young people will know and recognise, even when a science fiction or fantastical element creeps in. Polly is an Arvon tutor and regularly runs writing workshops in primary and secondary schools across the country as well as working for Bristol libraries, where she set up the Bristol Teen Book Award, a book award for Bristol secondary schools which celebrates inclusivity.

[pollyhoyen.com/](http://pollyhoyen.com/)

#### Fiction

*Boy in the Tower*. London: Corgi Children's, 2015. (9-11)

*Fly Me Home*. London: Corgi Children's, 2017. (9-11)

*Two Sides*. Illustrated by Binny Talib. London: Stripes Publishing, 2019. (5-8)

*Where Monsters Lie*. London: Corgi Children's, 2016. (9-11)

**Emily Hughes**

Emily Hughes likes to walk outside. When she draws and writes she doesn't want to tell children things plainly — she believes children can discover it themselves. Using three aids she tries to help children understand her stories. One is through environment; using something natural is comforting and familiar. Also, green is a special colour, and joyful to use. Another is through feeling, which is harder to set; she tries to do this by using expression, body language and colour. The most exciting is in details. She finds that children often see things that adults can't. She wants children to feel powerful by what they notice. These are gifts made for the observant. She makes books for all children, but perhaps she is making books for the child she was. Emily is of Hawaiian heritage and lives in London.

[@plaidemily](https://www.instagram.com/plaidemily)

#### Illustration/Picture Books

*A Brave Bear*. Written by Sean Taylor. London: Walker Books, 2016. (3-5)

*Brilliant*. Written by Roddy Doyle. London: Pan Macmillan, 2015. (5-9)

The *Charlie & Mouse* series (4 books). Written by Laurel Snyder. San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 2017-2019. (6-9)

*Everything You Need for a Treehouse*. Written by Carter Higgins. San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 2018. (3-6)

*The Little Gardener*. London: Flying Eye Books, 2015. (3-7)

*Wild*. London: Flying Eye Books, 2013. (3-7)

**Sonya Hundal**

Sonya is a British Asian writer living in rural Lincolnshire. She is also the owner and baker at Greenfield Bakers, a successful small bakery, which has been burning things since 2007. Sonya has been writing for performance and performing in theatre since 1986. She is a writer-in-residence with First Story at two schools in Lincolnshire. Sonya has worked with and mentored writers and performers across a range of age groups, as well as working in youth theatre, community theatre and in schools. Her recent writing has been focussed on short stories and the completion of a novel (mostly with the themes of the outsider perspective within speculative fiction). She loves sci-fi, so it pops up everywhere.

[@MortalGreenWhim](https://www.instagram.com/MortalGreenWhim)

#### Plays and Edited Fiction

*Incidents*. Sleaford Little Theatre. Feb. 2010. Contemporary play. (11+)

*The Journeys of Captain John Smith*. St Helena's Church, Willoughby Sept. 2007. Historical play. (14+)

*Losing my Religion*. New Writers' Drama Festival for Marie Curie Cancer Care, Terry O'Toole Theatre, 2010. (14+)

The *Mayflower* Series 1&2. Co-written with Nathan Hughes. Stump Radio, Blackfriars Arts Centre, 2006-07. Radio soap opera. (YA)

*Peril on the Purple Planet*. Blackfriars Arts Centre, July 2007. Sci-fi play. (8+)

*A View Between Worlds: an anthology by the First Story Group at Haven High Academy*. Ed. London: First Story, 2018. (11+)


**Yasmeen  
Ismail**


Yasmeen Ismail is an Irish writer and illustrator living in Bristol, making children's picture books. As much as she would like to just dash off a book, it has to have some worth. So she's compelled to write and draw to try, just a little bit, to make a tiny difference. She wants her stories to uplift everyone who reads them. Yasmeen enjoys celebrating differences and giving her characters the confidence to be who they want to be, regardless of expectations. She says 'I have to keep in mind that whatever I create is going into the hands of a small child, and as such I have a responsibility to that little person. We all have a responsibility to them. And we should take that seriously.' Yasmeen writes and illustrates most of her books.

[www.yasmeenismail.co.uk](http://www.yasmeenismail.co.uk)

[@YasmeenMay](https://www.instagram.com/YasmeenMay)

#### **Selected Illustration and Author-Illustrator Picture Books**

*Christmas for Greta and Gracie.* London: Nosy Crow, 2015. (3+)

*Happy, Sad, Feeling Glad.* London: Laurence King Publishing, 2017. (3+)

*I'm a Girl!* London: Bloomsbury, 2015. (3+)

*Joy.* Illustrated by Jenni Desmond. London: Walker Books, 2019. (3+)

*Kiki and Bobo's Sunny Day.* London: Walker Books, 2018. (3+)

*Nothing.* London: Bloomsbury, 2016. (3+)

*Specs for Rex.* London: Bloomsbury, 2014. (3+)

*Two Problems for Sophia.* Written by Jim Averbeck. London: Simon and Schuster, 2018. (3+)


**Sharna  
Jackson**


Sharna Jackson specialises in developing and delivering socially-engaged digital initiatives for children and young people across culture, publishing and entertainment. She is driven to encourage and increase diverse and disengaged audiences' participation in the arts locally, nationally and globally. Sharna has written three books, *Tate Kids British Art Activity Book*, *Tate Kids Modern Art Activity Book* and *High Rise Mystery* — the first in a middle-grade series featuring a sibling detective duo everyone's dying to meet. She is the Artistic Director at Site Gallery, Sheffield's leading international contemporary art space, specialising in moving image, new media and performance. She is on the board of Sheffield Doc/Fest, Upswing Aerial Arts and New Writing North, in addition to being a member of BAFTA's Children's and Learning and New Talent committees and the Children's Media Conference advisory board. Sharna was born and raised in Luton and currently lives in Sheffield and Rotterdam.

[@sharnajackson](https://www.instagram.com/sharnajackson)

#### **Fiction and Non-Fiction**

*High Rise Mystery.* London: Knights Of, 2019. (9-12)

*Tate Kids British Art Activity Book.* Illustrated by James Lambert. London: Tate Publishing, 2014. (6 +)

*Tate Kids Modern Art Activity Book.* Illustrated by James Lambert. London: Tate Publishing, 2014. (6 +)


**Nadine  
Kaadan**


Nadine Kaadan is an award-winning children's book author and illustrator from Damascus, Syria who has published many books in Arabic. She lives in London, where she completed MAs in communication design (Kingston University) and art and politics (Goldsmiths University). Her Arabic-language book *Answer me, Leila!* won the 2011 Anna Lindh Award for the best fiction book for children with special needs and was featured in the *Guardian* in 'Disability Inclusive Books That Should Be Available In English'. *Tomorrow*, about the daily life of a little boy during the Syrian conflict, was nominated for the 2019 Kate Greenaway Medal. Her latest title, *The Jasmine Sneeze*, is one of the first children's books in the UK that touches on Syria's long and proud culture and heritage in a time marred by war. Her work has featured on CNN's *Connect the World* programme and in a BBC short film among others.

[www.nadinekaadan.com/](http://www.nadinekaadan.com/)

#### **Author-Illustrator Fiction and Picture Books**

*The Jasmine Sneeze.* London: Lantana Publishing, 2016. (4+)

*Tomorrow.* London: Lantana Publishing, 2018. (4-8)

**Savita Kalhan**

Savita Kalhan was born in India but moved to the UK when she was very young. She graduated with a degree in politics and philosophy from the University of Wales, Aberystwyth. Savita was a batik artist and teacher before she turned to writing. She is passionate about inspiring teenagers to read and runs a reading group in her local library, as well as creative writing workshops. Her work explores challenging themes: cultural taboos, abuse, girls' rights, identity, male patriarchy and racism to mention a few. Recent publications include short stories in young adult anthologies *Stories from the Edge* and *Even Birds are Chained to the Sky*. Her debut novel *The Long Weekend* addressed the issue of stranger danger. Her new book, *The Girl in the Broken Mirror*, is described by Bali Rai as 'refreshing and very hard-hitting' and is nominated for a 2019 Carnegie Medal. Savita lives in north London.

[savitakalhan.com](http://savitakalhan.com)

[@savitakalhan](https://twitter.com/savitakalhan)

#### Fiction

'Aladdin's Lamp' in *Stories from the Edge: An Anthology*. Thame, Oxon: Albury Books, 2016. (YA)  
*The Girl in the Broken Mirror*. Colchester: Troika Books, 2018. (YA)

'The Poet' in *Even Birds are Chained to the Sky & Other Tales*. Edinburgh: The Fine Line, 2011. (YA)  
*The Long Weekend*. London: Andersen Press, 2008. (YA)

**Peter Kalu**

Peter Kalu is the author of three young adult novels: *The Silent Striker*, *Being Me* and *Zombie XI*. *The Silent Striker* is a semi-autobiographical novel which tells the story of how the world of a teen boy, Marcus, changes when he finds himself becoming deaf. Marcus appears as a side character in *Being Me*, which features as main protagonist the neuro-atypical Adele Vialli; and Marcus is also glimpsed in *Zombie XI*. The publishing rights to all three novels have been sold to Ghana and the USA. Peter has also set onto page two folktales for younger children, *Anansi and Tiger's Stew* and *The Singer and the Snorer*, tales he has told at countless schools within the UK and beyond. He has written nine novels in all, including science fiction, crime and comedy, as well as for the stage and screen. Based in Manchester, he is Artistic Director at Cultureword.

[peterkalu.com](http://peterkalu.com)

[@peterkalu](https://twitter.com/peterkalu)

#### Fiction

*Anansi the Spider and Tiger's Stew: A folk tale retold*. UK: Satchel 2006. (5-12)

*Being Me*. London: HopeRoad, 2016. (12-18)

*The Silent Striker*. London: HopeRoad, 2015. (12-18)

*The Singer and the Snorer: A folk tale retold*. UK: Satchel 2006. (9-13)

*Zombie XI*. London: HopeRoad, 2016. (10-16)

**Muhammad Khan**

Muhammad Khan is an engineer, maths teacher and young adult author. He writes for teenagers, taking inspiration from his own wonderful students. His books deal with difficult issues which young people may be struggling with in an ever-changing world. A passionate advocate for student voice, he believes every child is blessed with unique talents and deserves to be heard and celebrated. The teenagers in his books are vibrant, funny and brave individuals. Born and bred in south London, he recently earned an MA in creative writing from St Mary's. His first book, *I Am Thunder*, dealt with themes of Islamophobia, finding your own voice and radicalisation. His second book, *Kick the Moon*, explores toxic masculinity, gang culture, making and breaking friendships and the dangers of social media. His work has been nominated for the prestigious Carnegie Medal and he has spoken on behalf of Amnesty International.

[@mkhanauthor](https://twitter.com/mkhanauthor)

#### Fiction

*I Am Thunder*. London: Macmillan, 2018. (12+)

*Kick the Moon*. London: Macmillan, 2019. (12+)



**K P Kojo aka  
Nii Ayikwei  
Parkes**



K P Kojo is the pen name of Nii Ayikwei Parkes, a poet, novelist and 2007 recipient of Ghana's ACRA award for poetry and literary advocacy. His first book for children, *The Parade*, a book of Ananse stories, was selected for the 2012 USBBY's Outstanding International Books list in the United States and translated into Korean. His most recent book, *Tales from Africa* (2017) retells fables from traditions ranging from the Berber to Zulu. Prior to publishing Nii ran over 300 readings and workshops in schools around the world. In 2015, he was selected as one of Africa's 39 most promising authors of the new generation for the World Book Capital Africa 39 Project. Nii is based between Ghana and London.

[@BlueBirdTail](#)

#### **Fiction**

*The Parade: A Stampede of Stories about Ananse, the Trickster Spider.* Illustrated by Karen Lilje.

London: Lincoln Children's Books, 2011. (7-10)

*Tales From Africa.* London: Puffin Classics, 2017. (9-11)



**Patrice  
Lawrence**



Patrice Lawrence was born in Brighton and brought up in an Italian and Trinidadian household. Her first book for young adults, *Orangeboy*, was shortlisted for the Costa Children's Book Award and won the Bookseller YA Prize and Waterstone's Prize for Older Children's Fiction. *Indigo Donut*, her second book for teenagers, won the Crimefest YA Prize. Both books have been nominated for the Carnegie Medal. Patrice worked for more than 20 years for charities supporting equality and social justice. These themes (along with a serious amount of music) inform her stories. Patrice still lives in Brighton.

[@LawrencePatrice](#)

#### **Fiction**

Short story in *A Change Is Gonna Come.* London: Stripes, 2017. (12+)

*The Diver's Daughter.* Witney, Oxon: Scholastic, 2019. (8+)

*Granny Ting Ting.* London: A&C Black, 2009. (7+)

*Indigo Donut.* London: Hodder, 2017. (13+)

Short story in *Make More Noise.* London: Nosy Crow, 2018. (9+)

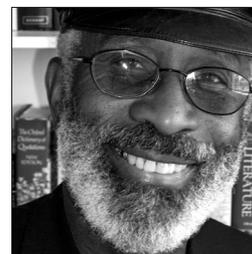
*Orangeboy.* London: Hodder, 2016. (13+)

*Rose, Interrupted.* London: Hodder, 2019. (13+)

*SNAP* – for World Book Day. London: Hodder, 2019. (12+)

*Toad Attack.* Edinburgh: Barrington Stoke, 2019. (6+)

*Wild Papa Woods.* London: Pearson, 2013. (7+)



**John Lyons**



John Lyons is a Trinidadian poet and painter living in Cambridgeshire. His collection for children, *Dancing in the Rain*, which he also illustrated, was shortlisted for the 2016 CLPE CLIPPA Award. John's creative development is rooted in his everyday life, where he constantly explores the physical and social environments for possibilities to craft poems, stories and paintings. He delights in being a positive role model in today's multi-ethnic society, often drawing inspiration from his Caribbean folklore. He particularly loves doing creative writing workshops in schools, as they help him to understand the imagination of children; and his use of creative play inspires him and his students. John writes both for children AND for the child still within adults.

[www.jcmlyons.co.uk](http://www.jcmlyons.co.uk)

#### **Selected Poetry and Illustration**

Poem in *101 Favourite Poems.* Compiled by John Foster. London: Collins, 2002. (9-11)

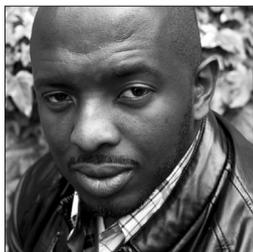
Poem in *A Caribbean Dozen.* Ed. John Agard & Grace Nichols. London: Walker Books, 1994. (5-9)

*Dancing in the Rain.* Leeds: Peepal Tree Press, 2016. Full poetry collection. (9-12)

Poem in *On a Camel To The Moon and other poems about journeys.* Compiled by Valerie Bloom. London: Belitha Press, 2001. (7+)

Poem in *Poems Then and Now.* Compiled by Fiona Waters. London: Evans Bros. Ltd, 2001. (10+)

Poem in *Rainbow World.* Ed. B Fraser and D Chatterjee. London: Hodder & Wayland, 2003. (7+)

**Nick Makoha**

Nick Makoha is originally from Uganda and has lived in Kenya and Saudi Arabia; he now lives in south London. His debut collection *Kingdom of Gravity* was shortlisted for the 2017 Felix Dennis Prize for Best First Collection and nominated by the *Guardian* as one of the best books of 2017. He is a Cave Canem Graduate Fellow and Complete Works Alumni. He won the 2015 Brunel International African Poetry Prize and was the 2016 winner of the Toi Derricotte & Cornelius Eady Chapbook Prize for his pamphlet *Resurrection Man*. He is a Trustee for the Arvon Foundation and The Ministry of Stories. Nick's play *My Father and Other Superheroes*, set across continents and eras, was originally developed at Spokelab, Theatre Royal Stratford East and has resulted in *The Hero in You* workshops, which Nick can tailor to work in a range of settings including schools, youth and community groups.

[www.nickmakoha.com](http://www.nickmakoha.com)

#### Poetry and Plays

*Kingdom of Gravity*. Leeds: Peepal Tree Press, 2016. Poetry. (14+)

*The Dark*. London: Oberon Books, 2018. Play. (11+)

**Ayisha Malik**

Ayisha Malik holds a BA in English literature and sociology, and an MA in creative writing. She worked at Penguin Random House before moving to Cornerstones, where she was managing editor for five years. Her debut novel, *Sofia Khan is Not Obligated*, was followed by the sequel, *The Other Half of Happiness*, which were both met with critical acclaim, and she was a W H Smith Fresh Talent Pick in 2016. She has contributed to the young adult anthology, *A Change is Gonna Come*, a compilation of short stories and poems by black, Asian and minority ethnic authors, and is the ghost-writer for *Great British Bake Off* winner, Nadiya Hussain. Ayisha's third novel, *This Green and Pleasant Land*, is out in 2019. She is currently a freelance editor and is working on a children's book for 5-7 year olds, as well as her fourth novel. Ayisha lives in south London.

[www.bit.ly/AyishaMalik](http://www.bit.ly/AyishaMalik)

[@Ayisha\\_Malik](https://twitter.com/Ayisha_Malik)

#### Fiction

Story in *A Change is Gonna Come*. London: Stripes Publishing, 2017. (YA)

*This Green and Pleasant Land*. London: Zaffre, 2019. (Adult)

*The Other Half of Happiness*. London: Zaffre, 2017. (Adult)

*Sofia Khan is not Obligated*. London: Twenty7, 2015. (Adult)

**Taran Matharu**

Taran Matharu lives in London and is half-Brazilian, half-Indian. He is the *New York Times* and *USA Today's* bestselling author of the fantasy *Summoner* series. He wrote *The Novice* (Book 1) on Wattpad, where a sample was read 8 million times. It was published and translated into 15 languages, winning several international awards, and has sold 900,000 copies in English. Pitched as Harry Potter meets *Lord of the Rings* meets Pokemon, it tells the story of Fletcher, an orphan blacksmith's apprentice living in a medieval world who accidentally summons a salamander and goes to a military school for summoners. Fletcher must help defeat invading orcs, while navigating political intrigues of scheming nobles. Covering themes of racism, social inequality and corruption, and finding particular success amongst reluctant boy readers, *Summoner* has a worldwide cult following.

[authorartanmatharu.com/](http://authorartanmatharu.com/)

[@TaranMatharu1](https://twitter.com/TaranMatharu)

#### Fiction

*The Battlemage* (Book 3). London: Hodder Children's Books, 2018. (11-18)

*The Inquisition* (Book 2). London: Hodder Children's Books, 2017. (11-18)

*The Novice* (Book 1). London: Hodder Children's Books, 2015. (11-18)

*The Outcast* (Prequel). London: Hodder Children's Books, 2018. (11-18)

*The Summoner's Handbook*. London: Hodder Children's Books, 2018. (11-18)

**Mei Matsuoka**

Mei is the daughter of a Japanese father and British mother. Born in Tokyo and moving to England at 11, she studied illustration and animation at Kingston University, London. She is an author and illustrator of picture books, mainly aimed at pre-school age children. Her stories explore serious/educational subjects, but vary in tone from comical to thought-provoking and often manifest a world embodying animals or non-human characters. She examines themes of right and wrong, prejudice, stereotyping, psychology, reality and abstract thought. Mei is motivated by the passion to create something that touches people's lives and hopefully leaves a positive impact on all. She enjoys expressing what is inside her, who she is and what she feels/thinks through illustration and storytelling. Mei is based in Buckinghamshire.

[www.meimatsuoka.com/](http://www.meimatsuoka.com/)

#### Selected Illustration/Picture Books

*Burger Boy*. Written by Alan Durant. London:

Andersen Press, 2005. (3-7)

*Footprints in the Snow*. London: Andersen Press, 2007. (3-7)

*The Great Balloon Hullabaloo*. Written by Peter Bently. London: Andersen Press, 2013. (3-7)

*The Great Sheep Shenanigans*. Written by Peter Bently. London: Andersen Press, 2012. (3-7)

*Raffi's Surprise*. Written by Julia Hubery. London: Simon and Schuster, 2006. (3-7)

*The Three Little Pigs*. Adapted by Kath Jewitt. Bath: Parragon, 2012. (3-7)

**Tariq Mehmood**

Tariq Mehmood was born in Pakistan and was brought to England in 1967 aged around seven to nine. He grew up in Bradford, where he was bussed to school (this racist practice was later suspended). He became homeless aged 16 and lived in parks and derelict buildings. He was a founding member of the Asian Youth Movement and United Black Youth league. In 1981 he was imprisoned on terrorism charges as a part of 'The Bradford 12', who were all later acquitted. He wrote his first novel whilst he was on remand in Armley jail in Leeds. His novels are set against a backdrop of migration, war, identity, longing, loss and love. He is the co-director of the award-winning documentary *Injustice* about deaths in police custody. He has three children and lives in Manchester.

[www.hoperoadpublishing.com/tariq-mehmood](http://www.hoperoadpublishing.com/tariq-mehmood)

#### Fiction

*Courageous Ali and The Heartless King*. London: Satchel, 2006. (10+)

*Half Brother*. London: Satchel, 2006. (10+)

*Hand on the Sun*. London: Penguin, 1983. (14+)

*Song of Gulzarina*. Canada: Daraja Press, 2016. (Adult)

*While There is Light*. Manchester: Comma Press, 2003. (Adult)

*You're Not Here*. Canada: Daraja Press, 2018. (12+)

*You're Not Proper*. London: HopeRoad, 2015. (12+)

**Momtaza Mehri**

Momtaza Mehri is a British-Somali poet, essayist and editor, and is the 2018-19 Young People's Laureate for London run by Spread the Word. During her tenure, Momtaza has been engaging young people (aged 13-25) across London, through poetry residencies and commissions, co-curating a Poetry Lab for talented young poets and supporting the Young People's Laureate Tour in six outer London boroughs. Momtaza's work has been featured in *Poetry Review*, *Vogue* and San Francisco Museum of Modern Art's *Open Space*, and on BuzzFeed and BBC Radio 4. She is a Complete Works Fellow and winner of the 2017 OutSpoken Page Poetry Prize and the 2018 Brunel African Poetry Prize. She won third place in the 2017 Poetry Society's National Poetry Competition. Momtaza's chapbook, *sugah.lump.prayer*, was published as part of the New Generation African Poets series; her poems also feature in *Ten: Poets of the New Generation*.

[@RuffneckRefugee](https://www.instagram.com/RuffneckRefugee)

#### Poetry

*sugah.lump.prayer*. Part of New-Generation African Poets series: Volume 8. Ed. Kwame Dawes and Chris Abani. New York: Akashic Books, 2017. (adult)

Poem included in *Ten: Poets of the New Generation*. Ed. Karen McCarthy Woolf. Northumberland: Bloodaxe Books, 2017. (adult)

**Fatima Mian**

Fatima Mian was born and raised in London, where she is a primary school teacher. She says the best part of her job is using creativity to build awesome things with the children, such as 3D astronauts and dinosaurs! Inspired by a Pixar exhibition she saw in Paris Fatima, who studied graphic design at university, was motivated to develop her skills as an illustrator. She is currently on sabbatical leave, travelling the world to pursue her other passions — art and photography.

[www.fatimamian.co.uk/](http://www.fatimamian.co.uk/)

#### Illustration

*It Must Have Been You.* Written by Zanib Mian. London: Sweet Apple Books, 2015. (2+)

**Zanib Mian**

Zanib Mian fell in love with writing at primary school. After studying molecular cell biology at University College London, she taught science in secondary school before deciding to move into children's publishing. Zanib felt that characters from all minorities were missing from books for young children and launched Sweet Apple Publishers with a clear commitment to publishing inclusive books. Her books include *Oddsockosaurus* and *The Robot That Said Moo*. They have featured on the BBC's CBeebies *Bedtime Stories* show and in the *Guardian* for their contribution to diverse children's literature. *The Muslims* won the 2018 Little Rebels Award and was longlisted for the 2018 UKLA Book Awards. She has also been nominated for the 2019 Carnegie Medal. Zanib lives in Wembley, London.

[@Zendibble](https://twitter.com/Zendibble)

#### Selected Fiction

*Adam in Lost and Found.* Illustrated by Maria Mian Goncalves. London: Sweet Apple Books, 2012. (4+)

*The Fairytale Times.* Illustrated by Laura Ewing. London: Sweet Apple Books, 2016. (7+)

*The Muslims.* London: Sweet Apple Books, 2017. (7+)

*My Dad's Beard.* Illustrated by Laura Ewing. London: Sweet Apple Books, 2014. (2+)

*Oddsockosaurus.* Illustrated by Bill Bolton. London: Sweet Apple Books, 2015. (3+)

*Planet Omar.* London: Sweet Apple Books, 2019. (8+)

*The Robot That Said Moo.* Illustrated by Tugrul Karacan. London: Sweet Apple Books, 2016. (3+)

**Kiran Millwood Hargrave**

Kiran Millwood Hargrave writes stories and works across genres, including poetry, plays and fiction for middle grade, young adult and grown-up audiences. Her books are female-led adventure stories, often taking place on islands, and focus around themes of difference, belonging, home and friendship. She aims to de-centre whiteness in her narratives, and often places working-class people of colour at the heart, giving them agency and control over their lives. She looks for the gaps and shadows in history and tries to shine a light on untold or marginalised experiences and voices. Kiran's work has won the Waterstones Children's Book Prize, British Book Award Children's Book of the Year and numerous regional awards. It has been shortlisted for the Costa Book Award, the *Blue Peter* Best Story Award, the Jhalak Prize for Writers of Colour (twice), and longlisted for the CILIP Carnegie Award. Kiran lives in Oxford.

[www.kiranmillwoodhargrave.co.uk/](http://www.kiranmillwoodhargrave.co.uk/)

#### Fiction

*The Girl of Ink & Stars.* Frome, Somerset: Chicken House, 2016. (8+)

*The Island at the End of Everything.* Frome, Somerset: Chicken House, 2018. (8+)

*The Way Past Winter.* Frome, Somerset: Chicken House, 2017. (8+)



**Poonam Mistry**



Poonam Mistry is a freelance illustrator living in Leicester who graduated in 2010 with a degree in graphic design and illustration from the University of Hertfordshire. Her style incorporates her love of nature and her Indian roots and explores the relationships between pattern, shapes and colour. Poonam's upbringing and childhood have heavily influenced her work, in particular being surrounded by Indian fabrics, Kalamkari textiles, Madhubani paintings and hand-painted ornaments. These patterns and intricate details are featured in her style of work. She loves folklore tales and stories of Hindu gods and goddesses and these have been a rich source of inspiration in a number of her illustrations. Poonam's work is drawn by hand with black ink before she uses computer software to add colour and adjust the composition of her illustrations.

[www.poonam-mistry.com/](http://www.poonam-mistry.com/)

#### Illustration/Picture Books

*You're Safe with Me.* Written by Chitra Soundar.

London: Lantana Publishing, 2018. (3+)

*You're Snug with Me.* Written by Chitra Soundar.

London: Lantana Publishing, 2018. (3+)



**Stefan Mohamed**



Stefan Mohamed was born in 1988 in Kingston-upon-Thames, but spent most of his childhood in Powys, Wales. Fittingly for someone of both Jewish and Sri Lankan heritage growing up in rural Wales, much of his fiction deals with slightly out-of-place characters getting into scrapes in the countryside. Stefan completed the first draft of his first novel, *Bitter Sixteen*, when he was 16. The quirky superhero adventure was eventually published in 2015 and became a *Guardian* Top Teen Read of 2015. The sequels, *Ace of Spiders* and *Stanly's Ghost*, followed in 2016 and 2017. A stand-alone fantasy novel for adults, *Falling Leaves* appeared in 2018. Stefan is also a performing poet; his first collection of poetry was published in 2016. He has a degree in creative writing from Kingston University and lives in Bristol.

[stefmo.co.uk/wp/](http://stefmo.co.uk/wp/)

#### Fiction and Poetry

*Ace of Spiders.* Norfolk: Salt Publishing, 2016. (YA)

*Bitter Sixteen.* Norfolk: Salt Publishing, 2015. (YA)

*Falling Leaves.* Norfolk: Salt Publishing, 2018.

(adult fiction)

*PANIC!* Bristol: Burning Eye Books, 2016. (poetry)

*Stanly's Ghost.* Norfolk: Salt Publishing, 2017. (YA)

*Stuff* (e-novella). Norfolk: Salt Publishing, 2014.



**Nick Mohammed**



Nick Mohammed is an established actor with recent roles in Ridley Scott's *The Martian*, *The Sense of an Ending* and Netflix's *Collateral*. He also played Piglet in Disney's latest action feature *Christopher Robin*. Nick's television writing credits include the six-part series *Intelligence*, co-starring David Schwimmer. He has featured in a host of TV comedies including *Sally4Ever*, *Camping*, *Uncle and Life's Too Short*. On radio, following the success of his hit BBC Radio 4 debut *Quarters*, he went on to write and record *Nick Mohammed in Bits*, *Apollo 21* and two series of *Detective Sergeant Nick Mohammed*. His recent live show *Mr Swallow and the Vanishing Elephant* received critical acclaim at the Edinburgh Fringe; he will be shooting a pilot for Channel 4 in 2019. His debut children's novel, *The Young Magicians and the Thieves' Almanac*, was released last year and he is currently working on the sequel.

[@nickmohammed](https://twitter.com/nickmohammed)

#### Fiction

*The Young Magicians and the Thieves' Almanac.*

London: Puffin, 2017. (9-12)



**Mique Moriuchi**



Mique Moriuchi makes pictures with paint, scissors, paper and glue. She love colour; her studio is messy, with paper trails often leading to the kitchen. Since completing her studies in illustration in 1999 (MA at Brighton University, BA at Norwich School of Art & Design), she has illustrated 23 picture books to date and was recently commissioned by Paperchase to work on a range of greeting cards. Mique currently lives in Bedford with her partner and two boys.

[www.miquemoriuchi.com/](http://www.miquemoriuchi.com/)

#### **Selected Illustration and Picture Books**

*Butterfly Girl*. Written by Simon Puttock. London: Hodder Children's Books, 2007. (6-11)

*Fresh Delicious*. Written by Irene Latham. USA: Boyd Mills Press, 2016. (4-8)

*I Imagine*. Written by Rachel Rivett. Oxford: Lion Hudson, 2011. (5-7)

*I'll See You In The Morning*. Written by Mike Jolley. Templar Publishing, 2005. (2-4)

*I'm a Little Alien*. Written by James Carter. London: Frances Lincoln, 2014. (3+)

*Just One Peaceful Pond*. Written by Chris Butterworth. London: Walker Books, 2008. (2-5)

*Mix And Match Animals*. USA: Piggy Toes Press, 2007. (2+)

*My Village*. Ed. by Dani Wright. London: Frances Lincoln, 2010. (3-6)

*The Story Goes On*. Written by Aileen Fisher. USA: Roaring Brook Press, 2005. (4-6)

*That's Love*. Written by Sam Williams. London: Hodder Children's Books, 2006. (2-4)



**Millie Murray**



Millie Murray was born in London to parents of Jamaican heritage. She is a qualified general/psychiatric nurse and also a youth worker. Millie writes novels for young adults, the first entitled *Kiesha* (1988). Her books tend to reflect black female, young adult experiences. She has worked in England and Wales in schools, libraries, colleges and a prison, facilitating creative writing workshops. Millie has written for *The Real McCoy*, BBC TV's black comedy sketch show. She was creator and co-writer of *The Airport* (BBC Radio 4 1995/96), the first radio series in Britain that epitomised black people's lives within a humorous setting. It was shortlisted for a radio comedy award. For several years she has been the Royal Literary Fund Fellow at the University of East London. Millie lives in east London is currently working on her new novel.

[@milliemurray58](https://twitter.com/milliemurray58)

#### **Fiction**

*All About Jas*. London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1990. (YA)

*Cairo Hughes*. London: The Women's Press, 1996. (YA)

*Ebony and the Mookatook Bush*. Illustrated by Judith Lawton. Harlow: Longman, 1994. (7-11)

*Jade*. London: The Women's Press, 2000. (YA)

*Kiesha*. London: The Women's Press, 1988. (YA)

*Lady A, A Teenage DJ*. London: The Women's Press, 1989. (YA)

*Lois*. Milton Keynes: Scripture Union Publishers, 2003. (YA)

*Sorrelle*. London: The Women's Press, 1998. (YA)



**Daljit Nagra**



Daljit's four poetry collections have won the Forward Prize for Best Individual Poem and Best First Book, the *South Bank Show* Decibel Award and the Cholmondeley Award, and been shortlisted for the Costa Prize and twice for the T S Eliot Prize. Daljit is a PBS New Generation Poet whose poems have appeared in *The New Yorker*, the *London Review of Books* and the *TLS*, and his journalism in the *Financial Times* and the *Guardian*. The inaugural Poet-in-Residence for BBC Radio 4 & 4 Extra, he presents the weekly *Poetry Extra*. He serves on the Council of the Royal Society of Literature and teaches at Brunel University, London. His work is taught at English GCSE level. Daljit lives in west London.

[www.daljitnagra.com](http://www.daljitnagra.com)

#### **Poetry**

*British Museum*. London: Faber & Faber, 2017. (14+)

*Look we have coming to Dover*. London: Faber & Faber, 2007. (14+)

*Ramayana*. London: Faber & Faber, 2013. (14+)

*Tippoo Sultan's Incredible White-Man Eating Tiger-Toy Machine!!!* London: Faber & Faber, 2011. (14+)


**Beverley  
Naidoo**


Beverley Naidoo joined the resistance to apartheid as a student in South Africa, leading to detention without trial and exile. She began writing while working as a teacher in Britain. Her first novel, *Journey to Jo'burg*, was originally banned in South Africa but opened a window for children elsewhere. She won the Carnegie Medal for *The Other Side of Truth*. She received the US African Studies Association Children's Book Award for *No Turning Back*, *Out of Bounds* (short stories with Foreword by Archbishop Desmond Tutu), *Burn My Heart* and *Who is King?*. In *Cinderella of the Nile*, she retells a 2000-year-old version from ancient Egypt. Widely translated, she has been a nominee for the Hans Christian Andersen Award and Astrid Lindgren Memorial Award. Beverley lives in Dorset.

[www.beverleynaidoo.com](http://www.beverleynaidoo.com)

#### Selected Fiction

*Burn My Heart*. London: Puffin, 2007. (11 +)  
*Cinderella of the Nile*. Illustrated by Marjan Vafaiean. London: Tiny Owl Publishing, 2018. (6+)  
*Journey to Jo'burg*. London: HarperCollins, 1985. (8+)  
*No Turning Back*. London: Penguin, 1995. (11+)  
*The Other Side of Truth*. London: Penguin, 2000. (10+)  
*Out of Bounds: Stories of Conflict and Hope*. London: HarperCollins, 2001. (10+)  
*Web of Lies*. London: Penguin, 2004. (11+)  
*Who is King? Ten Magical Stories from Africa*. Illustrated by Piet Grobler. London: Lincoln Children's Books, 2015. (6+)


**Natasha Ngan**


Natasha Ngan is a writer and yoga teacher. She grew up between Malaysia, where the Chinese side of her family is from, and the UK. This multicultural upbringing continues to influence her writing, and she is passionate about bringing diverse stories to teens. Natasha studied geography at the University of Cambridge before working as a social media consultant and fashion blogger. She recently moved to Paris, where she likes to imagine she drifts stylishly from brasserie to brasserie, notepad in one hand, wine glass in the other. In reality, she spends most of her time getting lost on the metro and confusing locals with her French. Her young adult novels are *The Elites*, *The Memory Keepers* and, most recently, *Girls of Paper and Fire*. Natasha is also co-owner of fashion, travel and lifestyle blog *Girl in the Lens*.

[natashangan.com/](http://natashangan.com/)

#### Fiction

*The Elites*. London: Hot Key Books, 2013. (YA)  
*Girls of Paper and Fire*. London: Hodder & Stoughton, 2018. (YA)  
*The Memory Keepers*. London: Hot Key Books, 2014. (YA)


**Grace Nichols**


Grace Nichols was born in Guyana and has lived in Britain since 1977. Her first collection of poetry, *I Is A Long-Memored Woman*, won the 1983 Commonwealth Poetry Prize. Among her other books for adults are the popular *The Fat Black Woman's Poems*. Her children's books include *The Poet Cat*, *Paint Me a Poem* (awarded the Children's Poetry Book-Shelf Best Single Author's Collection) and *Cosmic Disco*. She has edited anthologies including *Poetry Jump Up*; with her poet partner, John Agard, she edited collections such as *Under The Moon and Over the Sea*, which won a CLPE Award. She is among the poets on the current GCSE syllabus and received the Cholmondeley Award in 2000 as well as an Honorary Doctorate from the University of Hull. Her latest adult book is *The Insomnia Poems*.

[www.curtisbrown.co.uk/client/grace-nichols](http://www.curtisbrown.co.uk/client/grace-nichols)

#### Selected Poetry and Fiction

*Asana and the Animals*. Illustrated by Sarah Adams. London: Walker Books, 1997.  
*Cosmic Disco*. London: Frances Lincoln, 2013. (8-11)  
*Full Moon Night in Silk Cotton Tree Village: A Collection of Caribbean Folk Tales*. By John Agard and Grace Nichols. Illustrated by Rosie Woods. London: Collins, 2016. (8-9)  
*Paint Me A Poem. New Poems Inspired by Art in the Tate*. London: A & C Black, 2004.  
*The Poet Cat*. London: Bloomsbury 2000.  
*Sun-Time Snow-Time*. London: A & C Black, 2013. (7-9)

**Karl Nova**

Karl Nova is a hip hop artist, performance poet and award-winning author who also works as an educator running hip-hop flavoured creative writing workshops in schools all over the UK and abroad. His debut collection of poetry and short stories, *Rhythm And Poetry*, won the 2018 CLIPPA Poetry Award, which was presented to him at the National Theatre, London by Grace Nichols. The book has been a hit with children as young as seven all the way up into adolescence. Karl focuses on questioning the narrow definitions of what poetry is, as well as the discovery of the joy of poetic expression which came to him through the lyricism of rap music and the creativity found in spoken word slam poetry. He deals with growing up through childhood into adulthood and is often very humorous in his storytelling and reflections. Karl is based in London.

[www.karlnovaworld.com](http://www.karlnovaworld.com)

@KarlNova

### Poetry and Fiction

*Rhythm and Poetry*. Silsden, Yorkshire: Caboodle Books, 2017.

**Tola Okogwu**

Tola Okogwu is a journalist and author of the *Daddy Do My Hair?* picture book series. The books were inspired by the relationship between her husband and daughters and are designed to challenge some of the perceptions and preconceptions around race and gender roles within parenting. Her books have become an excellent way of encouraging diversity and inclusion from an early age. Having children from all ethnicities enjoy the book makes an important impact on how children can identify with each other. Through her books and wider writing, Tola constantly seeks to create 'mirrors and windows', allowing everyone the opportunity to read books that are reflective of their own experiences, backgrounds and cultures. An avid reader, Tola enjoys spending time with her family and friends around her home in Kent.

[tolaokogwu.com/](http://tolaokogwu.com/)

### Fiction

*Daddy Do My Hair: Beth's Twists*. Illustrated by Rahima Begum. London: Florence Elizabeth Publishing, 2016. (0-6)

*Daddy Do My Hair: Hope's Braids*. Illustrated by Rahima Begum. London: Florence Elizabeth Publishing, 2017. (0-6)

*Kechi's Hair Goes Every Which Way*. Illustrated by Naomi Wright. London: Florence Elizabeth Publishing, 2018. (0-8)

**Shereen Pandit**

Shereen Pandit's writing for young adults is used in schools and colleges in numerous countries. She has taught creative writing in schools for many years, as well as facilitating creative writing workshops for young people through community groups, theatres and library services in the UK and internationally. Born in Cape Town, South Africa in the apartheid era, Pandit became a lawyer, lecturer, political activist and trade unionist. Forced into political exile in the UK, she completed a PhD in law, continued her activism and began writing. Her prize-winning work for adults has been widely published in the UK and translated into languages as diverse as German and Chinese. She lives in London, where she works as a freelance writer, as well as a maths and English tutor.

[www.exiledwriters.co.uk/portfolio-items/shereen-pandit/](http://www.exiledwriters.co.uk/portfolio-items/shereen-pandit/)

### Fiction and Non-Fiction

'The Imam's Daughter'. Short story in *From the Bering Strait and Other Stories*. Ed. by Clem Cairns. Cork: Fish Publishing, 1999. (14+)

'Masks'. Short story written with Zora Laattoe. *In Lines in the Sand*. Ed. by Mary Hoffman and Rhiannon Lassiter. London: Frances Lincoln, 2003. (14+)

*Trafalgar High School, The Golden Years*. Ed. with Goolam Pandit. 2012. Non-fiction (14+)

'New Generations'. Special Issue, *Wasafiri Magazine*. Ed. with Beverley Naidoo. Issue 60, winter 2009. (14+)

**Rikin Parekh**

Rikin has a foundation degree from Camberwell College of Arts and a degree in illustration from the University of Westminster. After graduating, he worked as a production illustrator/creature designer, freelancing in the film industry, mainly working with monsters. He is a proud member of SCBWI-UK and has 300+ *Spider-Man* comics to his name. When Rikin isn't drawing you'll find him listening to the Beatles and Jimi Hendrix, munching away at pizza whilst watching a movie, trying to talk to the birds and stray cats in his garden — or working at a primary school as a Year 6 learning support assistant. His illustrations are predominately geared towards children from ages three up. The themes of his work revolve around friendships and dreams; he feels it's very important for children to understand that dreams are something that can become a reality, no matter how big or small. Rikin lives in Wembley, London.

[rikinparekh.com/](http://rikinparekh.com/)

#### Illustration

*Iguana Boy Saves the World With a Triple Cheese Pizza.* Written by James Bishop. London: Hodder Children's Books, 2018. (7-9)

*Iguana Boy Unmasks the Invisible Hero.* Written by James Bishop. London: Hodder Children's Books, 2019. (7-9)

*Iguana Boy Vs. The 30 Second Thief.* Written by James Bishop. London: Hodder Children's Books, 2018. (7-9)

*Turn The Wheels Times Tables.* London: Arcturus Publishing, 2015. (4-12)

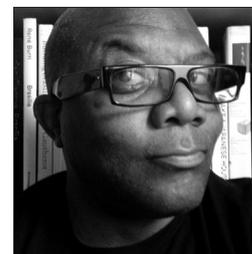
**Serena K Patel**

Serena Patel is a mum of two from Walsall, West Midlands. She is a law firm training co-ordinator and the family's finder of all lost things. As a child Serena would at every opportunity escape into the worlds created by authors, never imagining that one day she would write books. She writes for children because the opportunities to be silly and create funny characters are endless. Also because, as much as she loved reading as a child, there were no books with main characters like her. Serena writes about family, friendship and being yourself. She was shortlisted for the 2017 *Asian Writer Short Story Prize* and was a finalist in the 2018 *Undiscovered Voices Anthology*. Her first series features Anisha Mistry, who has a very loud, very large, chaotic family, and a big family wedding approaching — but the groom is missing! Can Anisha and best friend Milo save the day?

[@SerenaKPatel](https://twitter.com/SerenaKPatel)

#### Fiction

The *Anisha Mistry* series (3 books). London: Usborne Books, 2019. (7+)

**Woodrow Phoenix**

Woodrow Phoenix is a writer, artist, illustrator and graphic designer based in London and Cambridge. He is known for his free-wheeling experimentation with illustrative and graphic styles, with message-driven pictures offering an incongruous mix of the stylish, cute and sinister. His ground-breaking book *Rumble Strip* (2008) was deemed 'one utterly original work of genius' (*The Times*). In 2011 he co-edited *Nelson*, which won the 2012 British Comics Award for Best Book and an Eisner nomination. Other comic books and strips include *Donny Digits* (weekly, the *Guardian*); *The Sumo Family* (weekly, *The Independent on Sunday*, monthly, *Manga Mania* magazine); *The Liberty Cat* (quarterly in Japan in *Morning* magazine); and *SugarBuzz!* (in collaboration with co-creator Ian Carney), an anthology comic optioned for television by Walt Disney, the Cartoon Network and other independent production companies.

[www.woodrowphoenix.co.uk](http://www.woodrowphoenix.co.uk)

[@mrphoenix](https://twitter.com/mrphoenix)

#### Illustration and Comics

*Baz the Biz.* Written by Steve May. London: Mammoth, 1999. (7+)

*Count Milkula.* Co-authored with Robin Price. Leighton Buzzard: Mogzilla, 2006. (3-6)

*Donny Digits.* Weekly in the *Guardian*. Book out Christmas 2019. Comic strip. (14+)

*Is that your Dog?* Written by Steve May. London: Mammoth, 2001. (7+)

*That's a Horse of a Different Colour.* Weekly in *DFC*. Book out Spring 2020. Comic strip. (14+)



**Smriti  
Prasad-Halls**



Smriti Prasad-Halls' award-winning children's books include the US bestseller *I Love You Night and Day*. She is published in over 25 languages. Her picture books include characters from mischievous monsters to elephants in underpants, and often explore relationship and identity, how it feels to be in your own skin — and in someone else's. Her stories can be fast-paced and funny or lyrical and tender, but are always full of heart and speak to the child in us all. Smriti also creates bold board books to engage the very smallest readers, young fiction for newly independent readers and beautiful, highly illustrated non-fiction for older readers. *The Ways of the Wolf* and *The World of the Whale* are both nominated for the 2019 CILIP Kate Greenaway Medal. Smriti lives in London.

[www.smriti.co.uk/](http://www.smriti.co.uk/)

#### **Selected Picture Books and Non-Fiction**

*I Love You Night and Day*. Illustrated by Alison Brown. London: Bloomsbury, 2014. Picture book. (0-5)

*My Hand to Hold*. Illustrated by Alison Friend. London: Hodder, 2017. Picture book. (6-11)

*Norman the Naughty Knight*. Illustrated by Ian Smith. London: Egmont, 2016. Fiction. (5+)

*Ready Steady Dig*. Illustrated by Edward Eaves. London: Hodder, 2016. Picture book. (3-5)

*T-Veg: The Story of a Carrot-Crunching Dinosaur*. Illustrated by Katherina Manolessou. New York: Harry N Abrams, 2017. Picture book. (0-5)

*The Ways of the Wolf* and *The World of the Whale*. Illustrated by Jonathan Woodward. London: Wren and Rook, 2017-18. Non-fiction. (9+)



**Pooja Puri**



Pooja has loved writing stories since she was a child. She first tasted publishing success with her short story, 'Chess', and later graduated from King's College London with a degree in English language and literature. Whilst at university she read for a publishing house and has since worked in the education sector. In 2014, she was chosen as a winner of the Ideas Tap Writers' Centre Norwich Inspires competition. In 2017, she successfully completed an MA in writing for young people at Bath Spa University. Her debut novel, *The Jungle*, was released in 2017 and nominated for the CILIP Carnegie Medal 2018. She is currently working on her second book, a historical novel set in the Elizabethan era. Pooja is interested in exploring the idea of boundaries and experimenting with different voices. Based in London, she is represented by Lauren Gardner at The Bell Lomax Moreton Agency.

[@PoojaPuriWrites](https://www.poojapuriwrites.com/)

#### **Fiction**

*The Jungle*. Edinburgh: Ink Road, 2017. (YA)



**Yasmin  
Rahman**



Yasmin Rahman is a British Muslim, born, raised and living in Hertfordshire. She has an MA in creative writing from the University of Hertfordshire and an MA in writing for young people from Bath Spa University. Yasmin writes young adult books that tackle heavy themes, but with humour, lightness and, more often than not, a Muslim protagonist. She likes exploring topics that aren't talked about openly, particularly in South Asian culture, and writing minority characters where their minority isn't the 'issue'. Her debut novel, *All the Things We Never Said*, published in 2019, tells the story of three intensely troubled girls who meet and form an unlikely friendship when they join a suicide pact website. Yasmin contributed a short story to *A Change is Gonna Come* which was awarded a YA Book Prize Special Achievement Award by *The Bookseller* in 2018 for its commitment to making YA publishing more inclusive.

[@YasminwithanE](https://www.yasminwithanE.com/)

#### **Fiction**

*All the Things We Never Said*. London: Hot Key Books, 2019. (YA)

'Fortune Favours the Bold' (short story) in *A Change is Gonna Come*. London: Stripes Publishing, 2017. (12+)

**Bali Rai**

Bali Rai was born in Leicester and has written over 40 young adult, teen and children's books, and won multiple awards. His culturally diverse writing pushes boundaries and tackles a variety of issues. Extremely popular in schools across the world, he is passionate about the promoting literacy and reading for pleasure. His first novel, *(un)arranged marriage*, was published in 2001. He is currently working on a new young adult title, as well as two series for younger readers. His latest titles are *Stay A Bit Longer* and *Now or Never*. Bali Rai follows Liverpool FC and is a reggae music fan.

[www.balirai.co.uk](http://www.balirai.co.uk)

#### Selected Fiction

*Game On*. Edinburgh: Barrington Stoke, 2015. (10+)

*The Guru & The King*. Illustrated by Victoria Maderna. London: A&C Black, 2012. Picture Book. (0-5)

*The Harder They Fall*. Edinburgh: Barrington Stoke, 2017. (10+)

*Kiss of Death*. London: Collins Read On, 2014. (13+)

*The Night Run*. London: Bloomsbury, 2014. (10+)

*Old Dog New Tricks*. Edinburgh: Barrington Stoke, 2014. (10+)

The *Soccer Squad* series (4 books). London: Penguin, various. (7+)

*Stay A Little Longer*. Edinburgh: Barrington Stoke, 2018. (10+)

*Tales from India*. London: Penguin Classics, 2017. (9+)

*Them & Us*. Nottingham: Five Leaves Publications, 2016. (11+)

*Web of Darkness*. London: Penguin, 2014. (13+)

**Madhvi Ramani**

Madhvi Ramani is a British Asian writer who has published three children's books: *Nina and the Travelling Spice Shed*, *Nina and the Kung Fu Adventure*, and *Nina and the Magical Carnival*. Her horror, fantasy and literary short stories have appeared in various anthologies and magazines, including *Best of British Horror Stories*, *Asia Literary Review* and *Stand*. She also writes essays, articles, plays and screenplays. Her work covers themes of identity, gender, culture and politics. She is based in Berlin, Germany.

[www.madhviramani.com](http://www.madhviramani.com)

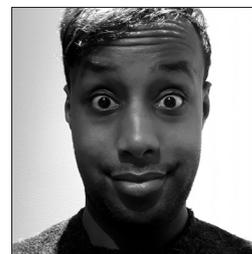
[@madhviramani](https://twitter.com/madhviramani)

#### Fiction

*Nina and the Kung Fu Adventure*. London: Penguin Random House, 2013. (7+)

*Nina and the Magical Carnival*. London: Penguin Random House, 2014. (7+)

*Nina and the Travelling Spice Shed*. London: Penguin Random House, 2012. (7+)

**Ramzee aka Ramsey Hassan**

Ramzee is the pen name of Ramsey Hassan, a creator stories for comics from Battersea, south-west London. He's been making comics for four years and the stories he tells are playful spins on genre from a black and underclass lens. A big push that got him to make comics was that the London small press scene was very much dominated by white middle-class art school graduates who made very beautiful but twee comics which diverted from previous generations — where British comic books were a working-class, underdog space that spewed a stream of seditious material grappling with social issues and challenging the establishment. Ramzee tells genre stories that centre characters who aren't normally seen and tackles subjects that aren't normally heard. He has been nominated for a British Comic Award and won second prize at Faber's FAB Prize.

[@RamzeeRawkz](https://twitter.com/RamzeeRawkz)

#### Comics

*Junk Food*. A youth culture anthology created by Ramzee. (16+)

*Triangle*. Illustrated by Josceline Fenton, Tom Crowley and Liz Greenfield. Comic. (14+)

*Zorse*. With Liz Greenfield. 2016. (5+)

**Leila Rasheed**

Leila Rasheed is a British-Asian writer of mixed heritage who grew up in Libya. She has always loved children's literature: its powerful themes, linguistic magic and power to change the world. Her favourite place to be is probably between ages nine to thirteen, but it all depends on the story. Some of her published books are funny and contemporary, but she loves writing historical and fantasy too. Many of her stories are in some way about a search for identity. She enjoys exploring new forms and genres. Leila's other role is supporting emerging writers. After graduating from the University of Warwick's MA in writing, she returned to design and teach a module in writing for children and young people. She created the Megaphone writer development scheme, which supports black, Asian and minority ethnic children's and young adult writers as they write their first novel. Leila is based in south Birmingham.

[www.leilarasheed.com](http://www.leilarasheed.com)

[www.megaphonewrite.com](http://www.megaphonewrite.com)

#### Fiction

*The At Somerton* trilogy. New York & London: Disney Hyperion, 2013 (12+)

*Chips, Beans and Limousines*. London: Usborne, 2008. (8+)

*Doughnuts, Dreams and Drama Queens*. London: Usborne, 2008. (8+)

*Socks, Shocks and Secrets*. London: Usborne, 2008. (8+)

*The Witch of Turlingham* series (5 books). Written as Ellie Boswell. London: Little Brown, 2012. (9+)

**Onjali Q. Raúf**

Onjali is the founder of Making Herstory, an organisation mobilising men, women and children from all walks of life to tackle the abuse and trafficking of women and girls in the UK and beyond. Her first novel, *The Boy at the Back of the Class*, was shortlisted for the 2019 *Blue Peter* Book Award. It portrays the refugee crisis through the eyes of a child at a UK school. Written in honour of the many children she has encountered in her works with refugee aid teams, it aims to enhance children's understanding of what the label 'refugee' means, and what they can do to support children fleeing wars and other man-made disasters. Her second novel, *The Star Outside My Window*, similarly touches on a difficult issue; this time, that of domestic violence leading to homicide, as experienced by a ten-year-old child. Onjali lives in east London.

[@OnjaliRauf](https://twitter.com/OnjaliRauf)

#### Fiction

*The Boy at the Back of the Class*. London: Orion Children's Books, 2018. (8-12)

*The Star Outside My Window*. London: Orion Children's Books, 2019. (8-12)

**Na'ima B Robert**

Na'ima B Robert is an African Muslim woman of mixed descent who grew up in Zimbabwe. She sees writing for children as 'writing a love letter to the next generation'. She writes to reflect experiences that are often unspoken, unexplored and uncelebrated and to show 'the complexity and beauty of our struggles and triumphs as non-members of the dominant culture'. She wants to disrupt the narrative that paints people of colour and their experiences as 'other', instead placing children at the centre of stories that reflect their lived reality. Her work explores themes of identity, belonging, faith, respect for difference and, ultimately, pride in all that makes each of us unique. Na'ima has also published under the name Thando McLaren. She lives in Mirfield, West Yorkshire.

[@NaimaBRobert](https://twitter.com/NaimaBRobert)

#### Selected Fiction and Non-Fiction

*All Kinds of Homes*. Written as Thando McLaren. London: Tango Books, 2005. (8+)

*Black Sheep*. London: Frances Lincoln, 2013. (13+)

*Boy vs. Girl*. London: Frances Lincoln, 2010. (13+)

*From Somalia, with Love*. London: Frances Lincoln, 2009. (13+)

*Journey Through Islamic Art*. London: Mantra Lingua, 2005. (5+)

*Mabrook! A World of Muslim Weddings*.

Illustrated by Shirin Adl. London: Lincoln Books, 2016. (4-7)

*She Wore Red Trainers: A Muslim Love Story*.

Markfield, Leics: Kube Publishing, 2014. (13+)

*Yum! Let's Eat!* London: Mantra Lingua, 2008. (5+)

**S F Said**

S F Said is a British Muslim children's author, originally from the Middle East. His novels combine action and adventure with themes of identity, difference and belonging. His first book, *Varjak Paw*, is about a Mesopotamian Blue cat who dreams of becoming a great warrior. It won the Smarties Prize for Children's Literature, has sold 500,000 copies and been translated into 12 languages. The sequel, *The Outlaw Varjak Paw*, was BBC *Blue Peter* Book of the Year. His third book, *Phoenix*, is about a human boy and an alien girl who must save a galaxy threatened by war between humans and aliens. It represented the UK on the IBBY International Honour Book List, was shortlisted for the *Guardian* Children's Fiction Award, and nominated for the Carnegie and Kate Greenaway Medals. S F Said has written on children's and young adult literature for the *Guardian* and *Daily Telegraph*. He lives in London.

[www.sfsaid.com/](http://www.sfsaid.com/)

[@whatSFSaid](https://twitter.com/whatSFSaid)

#### Fiction

*The Outlaw Varjak Paw*. Oxford: David Fickling Books, 2006. (8+)

*Phoenix*. Oxford: David Fickling Books, 2013. (9+)

*Varjak Paw*. Oxford: David Fickling Books, 2006. (8+)

**Anjan Sarkar**

Anjan Sarkar is a British illustrator from a mixed-race British/Indian background. He has been illustrating professionally since 2010 and is currently working exclusively on children's picture books and chapter books. He loves to draw expressive characters and try to inject a bit of humour into every image. Although he thinks of himself as British, his Indian heritage has influenced some of the projects he has been commissioned to work on, including *Queen of the Hanukkah Dosas* (about a mixed Jewish/Hindu family celebrating Hanukkah) and *Rum Pum Pum* (a story inspired by the Indian landscape, its wildlife and culture). He thinks picture books are a great way to introduce children to ideas, people and places that they wouldn't normally come into contact with. He lives in Sheffield, Yorkshire.

[anjansarkar.co.uk/](http://anjansarkar.co.uk/)

[@LovelyLovelyJam](https://twitter.com/LovelyLovelyJam)

#### Illustration/Picture Books

*The Alien Next Door* series. Written by A I Newton. New York: Little Bee Books, 2018. (6-8)

*Level-Up* series. Written by Tom Nicoll. London: Stripes Publishing, 2019. (7-9)

*Queen of The Hanukkah Dosas*. Written by Pamela Ehrenberg. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2017. (4-7)

*Rum Pum Pum*. Written by David L Harrison and Jane Yolen. New York: Holiday House Books, 2019. (4-7)

*Sadiq* series. Written by Siman Nuurali. Minnesota: Capstone, 2019. (4-8)

**Emma Shevah**

Emma Shevah is half-Thai and half-Irish, but was born and raised in London. This diverse heritage influences her writing, which is typically about identity and what makes us who we are. She writes funny, deep books that she hopes will make readers think. *Dream on Amber* is about fatherless, half-Japanese Amber Miyamoto, who invents an imaginary dad to help her with her escalating problems. *Dara Palmer's Major Drama* is about an adopted Cambodian girl who wants the lead role in a play and has to take matters into her own hands to achieve it. And *What Lexie Did* follows a Greek Cypriot girl who tells a huge lie that splits her family apart and separates her from her cousin and best friend, Eleni. *Hello Baby Mo!*, for early readers, follows school boy Adam dealing with an exasperating new sibling, and will be published in 2019. Emma lives in Brighton.

[emmashevah.com/](http://emmashevah.com/)

[@emmashevah](https://twitter.com/emmashevah)

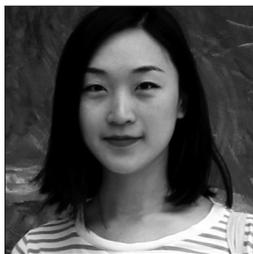
#### Fiction

*Dara Palmer's Major Drama*. Somerset: Chicken House Books, 2015. (8-12)

*Dream on, Amber*. Somerset: Chicken House Books, 2014. (8-12)

*Hello Baby Mo!* London: Bloomsbury, 2019. (5+)

*What Lexie Did*. Somerset: Chicken House Books, 2018. (8-12)

**Qian Shi**

Qian Shi is a Chinese director, animator and illustrator based in east London who grew up in Shijiazhuang, a northern city in China. She's always been drawn to stories and loves making pictures. Her charming illustrative style and understanding of storytelling brings an engaging mood and humour to her work. She has worked with Donna Wilson, Volvo and Disney. Her short animation *Shoe* (2008) won several international animation film awards and her debut picture book, *The Weaver*, published by Andersen Press, has now been translated into multiple languages.

[www.qianshi.co.uk/](http://www.qianshi.co.uk/)

#### **Author-Illustrator Picture Book**

*The Weaver*. London: Andersen Press, 2018. (3+)

**Nadia Shireen**

Nadia Shireen enjoyed making homemade magazines and comics as a child. She studied law at university and then worked in magazine journalism; it was during this time that she started to draw again. After a lifetime of doodling in the sidelines, Nadia decided to pay some attention to drawing and in 2007 was accepted onto an MA course in children's book illustration at Anglia Ruskin University, Cambridge. Her debut book, *Good Little Wolf*, received a mention in the Bologna Ragazzi Opera Prima Award and won the UKLA Book Award. Nadia has been shortlisted for the Roald Dahl Funny Prize and the Waterstones Children's Book Prize. She lives in London.

[@NadiaShireen](https://twitter.com/NadiaShireen)

#### **Author-Illustrator Picture Books**

*Billy and the Beast*. London: Jonathan Cape, 2018. (3+)

*Billy and the Dragon*. London: Jonathan Cape, 2019. (3+)

*The Bumblebear*. London: Jonathan Cape, 2016. (3-5)

*The Cow Who Fell to Earth*. London: Jonathan Cape, 2017. (2+)

*Good Little Wolf*. London: Jonathan Cape, 2011. (3-5)

*Hey, Presto!* London: Jonathan Cape, 2012. (3-5)

*Yeti and the Bird*. London: Jonathan Cape, 2013. (3-5)

**Nikesh Shukla**

Nikesh Shukla is the author of three novels. His latest, *The One Who Wrote Destiny*, came out in spring 2018. His debut novel, *Coconut Unlimited*, was shortlisted for the 2010 Costa First Novel Award. His second novel *Meatspace* was released to critical acclaim in 2014. Nikesh has written for the *Guardian*, *Observer*, *Independent*, *Esquire*, *Buzzfeed*, *Vice* and BBC 2, *LitHub*, *Guernica* and BBC Radio 4. Nikesh is also the editor the bestselling essay collection, *The Good Immigrant*, which won the reader's choice at the Books Are My Bag Awards. Nikesh was one of *Foreign Policy* magazine's 100 Global Thinkers and *The Bookseller's* 100 most influential people in publishing in 2016 and in 2017. He is the co-founder of the literary journal *The Good Journal* and The Good Literary Agency and is based in Bristol.

[www.nikesh-shukla.com/](http://www.nikesh-shukla.com/)

#### **Fiction**

*Coconut Unlimited*. London: Quartet Books, 2010. (14+)

*Meatspace*. London: The Friday Project, 2015. (Adult)

*The One Who Wrote Destiny*. London: Atlantic Books, 2018. (Adult)

*Run, Riot*. London: Hodder Children's Books, 2018. (YA)



**Ranjit Singh  
Dhaliwal**



Ranjit Singh Dhaliwal is a British Indian from a Sikh background. He produces work for anyone who wants to read it! There are no specifics to his approach, he just follows his inspiration. He likes stories that are funny or thoughtful. A financial professional by day, he is fascinated by how a picture book – like a balance sheet – can present a story with astounding brevity and depth of expression. *Nimesh the Adventurer* is, he hopes, a humorous story about a boy's compromise with the world around him. The story has been nominated for the Kate Greenaway Medal 2019 and was longlisted for the Cogan Diversity Picture Book Award, among others. Ranjit is based in Ealing in west London.

[www.lantanapublishing.com/ranjit-singh/](http://www.lantanapublishing.com/ranjit-singh/)  
**Fiction**

*Nimesh the Adventurer*. Illustrated by Mehrdokht Amini. London: Lantana Publishing, 2018. (4-8)



**Chitra Soundar**



Chitra Soundar is an Indian-born British author and storyteller based in London. She has written over 30 books published across Asia, Europe and North America. Chitra has written picture books, stories for emerging readers, poetry and junior fiction. Chitra grew up hearing tales from Indian epics and folk wisdom and her stories are often set in India, inspired by her heritage. She often visits schools, libraries and festivals to run writing and storytelling workshops because she believes stories widen our imagination and help us understand the people we share our planet with. She also writes short stories for adults as C lyengar.

[www.chitrasoundar.com](http://www.chitrasoundar.com)

[@csoundar](https://twitter.com/csoundar)

**Selected Fiction**

*A Dollop of Ghee and a Pot of Wisdom*. Illustrated by Uma Krishnaswamy. London: Walker Books, 2010. (6+)

The *Farmer Falgu* series (4 books). Illustrated by Kanika Nair. Langport, Somerset: Red Robin Books, 2015-2018. Picture Book (3+)

*Manju's Magic Wishes*. Illustrated by Verónica Montoya. London: Bloomsbury, 2019. (5+)

*Pattan's Pumpkin*. Illustrated by Frané Lessac. Hereford: Otter-Barry Books, 2016. Picture Book (3+)

*Shubh Diwali*. Illustrated by Charlene Chua. Park Ridge, IL: Albert Whitman, 2019. Picture Book (3+)

The *You're Safe/Snug/Strong with Me* books (3). All illustrated by Poonam Mistry. London: Lantana Publishing, 2018-19. Picture Books (3+)



**Michael de  
Souza**



Michael de Souza is the author of the classic book series *Rastamouse* and the creator of the well-known BBC CBeebies character of the same name, along with bandmates Scratchy and Zoomer, who form Da Easy Crew. He is also co-founder of Little Roots Publishing, who produced the original books. Michael came to England in 1960, leaving Trinidad to join his parents in west London. He has taught swimming for 22 years. Seeing the imagination and bravery of his students in overcoming their fear of water inspired Michael to write. His first book, *Rastamouse and the Crucial Plan*, was published in 2003; by 2011 it had become a much-loved animated series. Michael has been taking *Rastamouse* and a taste of the Caribbean to thousands of children and families in schools and libraries, locally, nationally and internationally since 2004.

[rastamouse.com/wp/](http://rastamouse.com/wp/)

**Fiction (All with Genevieve Webster)**

*Rastamouse and the Crucial Plan*. London: Little Roots, 2004. (2-5)

*Rastamouse and Da Bag-a Bling*. London: Little Roots, 2006. (2-5)

*Rastamouse and the Double-Crossin' Diva*. London: Macmillan, 2012. (2-5)

*Rastamouse and Da Micespace Mystery*. London: Macmillan, 2013. (2-5)

*Rastamouse: Marathon Mystery*. London: Campbell/Macmillan, 2013. (0-3)

*Rastamouse: Pirate Rhythms*. London: Campbell/Macmillan, 2013. (0-3)

**Holly Sterling**

Holly is a children's author and illustrator. She loves to work by hand using a variety of different media including watercolour, pencil and different printing processes. She graduated from the University of Sunderland with a degree in illustration and design, before going on to do a Masters at Edinburgh College of Art. In 2013, she was highly commended for the Macmillan Illustration Prize and was the winner of the Seven Stories/Frances Lincoln Illustration Competition. Her first illustrated picture book, *15 Things NOT to do with a baby*, was published in 2016, and her first author illustrated title, *Hiccups*, came out in 2017.

[hollysterling.blogspot.com](http://hollysterling.blogspot.com)

[@holly\\_sterling](https://twitter.com/holly_sterling)

#### Illustration/Picture Books

The *15 Things NOT to do* series (3 books). All written by Margaret McAllister. London: Lincoln Children's Books, 2016--18. (2-6)

The *Everybody Feels* series (4 books). All written by Moira Butterfield. London: QED Publishing, 2016-17. (3-7)

*Hiccups*. London: Frances Lincoln, 2017.

*Pop-out and Play Nativity Story*. London: Egmont Publishing, 2015. (3+)

**Tammy Taylor**

Tammy Taylor is a London-based illustrator who draws manga style comics and illustrations in both traditional and digital media. During the last ten years, her work has been included in several anthologies in the UK and North America and she has also produced a number of self-published comics for children and teenagers, usually with female protagonists and often from minority ethnic backgrounds. She is fond of drawing slice-of-life stories with a hint of magical realism, fantasy, adventure and horror. In 2012 she was a runner-up in the Japanese Embassy's Manga Jiman Competition; she came sixth in 2015. She has had comic strips featured in *Kerrang* magazine and her most recent work includes illustrations of *Doctor Who* for Penguin Random House and the BBC.

[www.dreamripper.net](http://www.dreamripper.net)

#### Illustration/manga art included in:

*Aesthetic Warriors: Crystal Tears*. A collaboration zine with 20 contributors. Cambridge: PinkAppleJam, 2018 (15+)

*Doctor Who: The Women Who Lived*. By Christel Dee and Simon Guerrier. London: Ebury/BBC Books, 2018. (10+)

**Uday Thapa Magar**

Uday Thapa Magar is a Nepalese-born illustrator, printmaker and an all-round image maker. His images aren't really targeted at any one person or group in particular, but are a response to the subject he's been given. Uday loves the challenge of receiving a brief, seeing it as an opportunity to learn about things and subjects he wouldn't have found out on his own. He likes experimenting with ideas and producing images which demonstrate his process and knowledge. Uday explores themes of mythology and daring characters and is drawn to history and the ordinary life of the yester years, as well as to natural wildlife, especially birds and whales. These subjects give him a narrative and the potential to study character. He currently lives in Hampshire.

[@orbit.180](https://twitter.com/orbit.180)

#### Illustration included in:

*Sir Rover and His Elated Pursuit for Delectable Satisfaction*. London: Pop Up Projects, 2017.

(primary)


**Kevin Tsang**


Kevin Tsang was born in Copenhagen in 1987 to Hong Kong Chinese parents and raised in Atlanta, Georgia. He's lived and worked in the USA, Australia and Hong Kong, and is currently based in London. Kevin is the co-author of the young fiction series *Sam Wu is Not Afraid*, which he writes with his wife, author Katie Tsang (nee Katherine Webber). The series was inspired by wanting to see more books featuring children from Asian heritage backgrounds but which are accessible and enjoyable to all children. Some of Sam Wu's experiences are based on Kevin's own childhood. In each Sam Wu book, Sam faces a different fear but, with the support of his family and friends, as well as his own bravery, he's able to overcome each worry. Kevin hopes that children will be both inspired and entertained by the Sam Wu books.

[@kevsang](https://www.instagram.com/kevsang)

#### **Fiction (all with Katie Tsang)**

*Sam Wu is NOT Afraid of The Dark*. London: Egmont, 2019. (5-9)

*Sam Wu is NOT Afraid of Ghosts*. London: Egmont, 2018. (5-9)

*Sam Wu is NOT Afraid of Sharks*. London: Egmont, 2018. (5-9)

*Sam Wu is NOT Afraid of Spiders*. London: Egmont, 2019. (5-9)


**Ken Wilson-Max**


Born in Zimbabwe, Ken Wilson-Max lives in London. He has written and illustrated over 50 books for children. He also illustrates things for grow-ups and businesses and publishes work from other creators through Alanna Max. As a younger man, Ken made stories from what he saw in his travels. He was excited and so the work was exciting. As he became more experienced and familiar with his surroundings, he saw that everyone had a story to tell. He became determined to inspire others to tell theirs. He found this made his stories much better. It also allowed him to experiment and learn. Since 2014, he's also been publishing the *Chicken Newspaper* for children all over the world.

[www.kenwilsonmax.com](http://www.kenwilsonmax.com)

[@kenwilsonmax](https://www.instagram.com/kenwilsonmax)

#### **Selected Author-Illustrator Picture Books**

*Astro Girl*. Hereford: Otter-Barry Books, 2019. (3-7)

*Big Red Fire Engine*. London: Pavilion, 2011. (3-7)

*Halala means Welcome*. Brighton: Chrysalis Children's Books, 1999. (3-7)

The *Interactive Heroes* books (3 books). Brighton: Chrysalis Children's Books, 2005. (3-7)

*L is for Loving*. New York: Disney-Hyperion, 1999. (3-7)

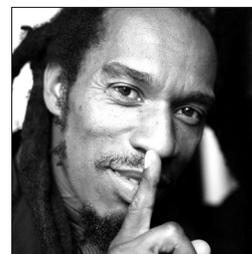
*Lenny and Wilbur*. London: Alanna, 2019. (3-7)

*Little Orange Submarine*. New York: Cartwheel Books, 2001. (3-7)

*Max's Starry Night*. London: Belitha Press, 2003. (3-7)

*Wake Up Sleep Tight*. London: Bloomsbury, 1997. (3-7)

*Zelda in the City*. London: Dial, 2000. (3-7)


**Benjamin Zephaniah**


Benjamin Zephaniah is a pioneer of the performance poetry scene. He has recorded albums, written plays for stage, radio and television, and he writes poetry for children, adults, and novels for teenagers. He is also an actor and television presenter. His message is one of unity, peace and expression through creativity. He holds 16 honorary doctorates and is visiting professor at De Montfort University and Professor of Poetry and Creative Writing at Brunel University. His autobiography, *The Life and Rhymes of Benjamin Zephaniah*, was nominated for two major awards and he is constantly touring with his band. Benjamin lives in Lincolnshire.

[benjaminzephaniah.com/](http://benjaminzephaniah.com/)

#### **Selected Poetry, Fiction and Non-Fiction**

*Funky Chickens*. London: Puffin, 1996. Poetry. (9-11)

*Gangsta Rap*. London: Bloomsbury, 2004. Novel. (YA)

*J Is for Jamaica* and *When I Grow Up*. Photographs by Prodeepta Das. London: Lincoln Children's Books, 2006-07. (4-7)

*Kung Fu Trip*. London: Bloomsbury, 2011. Non-fiction. (13+)

*Primary Rhyming Dictionary*. Chambers, 2004. Dictionary and Poetry. (11+)

*Propa Propaganda*. Northumberland: Bloodaxe Books, 1996. Poetry. (14+)

*Refugee Boy*. London: Bloomsbury, 2001. Novel. (YA)

*Talking Turkeys*. London: Puffin, 2015. (9-11)

*Terror Kid*. London: Hot Key Books, 2014. Novel. (YA)

# Jon Daniel Afro Supa Hero



Speaking Volumes were delighted to work with Jon Daniel on our first two *Breaking Ground* brochures which highlighted 200 British black, Asian and minority ethnic writers in beautiful keepsake publications, designed to be timeless. They were booklets which looked as stylish on the bookshelf as they did in people's hands — simultaneously useful and aesthetically pleasing. We miss Jon's wonderful contribution to our mission towards making literature diverse and inclusive, but are so happy to be keeping the spirit of his work alive through Jane Daniel's wonderful designs for *Breaking New Ground*.

[jon-daniel.com](http://jon-daniel.com)

Jon's work can be purchased from:  
[pstore.bigcartel.com](http://pstore.bigcartel.com)



# Authors and Illustrators by Location

## South West

Jasbinder Bilan (Bath)  
Parys Gardener (Bristol)  
Jamila Gavin  
(Gloucestershire)  
Polly Ho-Yen (Bristol)  
Yasmeen Ismail (Bristol)  
Stefan Mohamed  
(Bristol)  
Beverley Naidoo  
(Dorset)  
Nikesh Shukla (Bristol)  
Uday Thapa Magar  
(Hampshire)

## South East

Shirin Adl (Oxford)  
John Agard (Sussex)  
Malorie Blackman  
(Kent)  
Valerie Bloom (Kent)  
Tanya Byrne (Surrey)  
Allen Fatimaharan  
(Oxford)  
Bex Glendinning (Kent)  
Lorraine Gregory (Essex)  
Catherine Johnson (East  
Sussex)  
Patrice Lawrence  
(Brighton)

Mei Matsuoaka  
(Buckinghamshire)  
Kiran Millwood  
Hargrave (Oxford)  
Grace Nichols (Sussex)  
Tola Okogwu (Kent)  
Yasmin Rahman  
(Hertfordshire)  
Emma Shevah (Brighton)

## London

Dapo Adeola  
Ade Adepitan  
Sav Akyüz  
Mehrdokht Amini  
Raymond Antrobus  
Humza Arshad  
Dean Atta  
Yaba Badoe  
Ben Bailey Smith  
Francesca Beard  
Floella Benjamin  
Lennox Benson  
Abdullahi Botan Hassan  
Sita Brahmachari  
Sarwat Chadda  
Joseph Coelho  
Alex Falase-Koya  
Caleb Femi  
Candy Gourlay



Emily Hughes  
Amina Jama  
Nadine Kaadan  
Savita Kalhan  
Muhammad Khan  
K P Kojo aka Nii Ayikwei  
Parkes  
Errol Lloyd  
Nick Makoha  
Ayisha Malik  
Irfan Master  
Taran Matharu  
Momtaza Mehri  
Fatima Mian  
Zanib Mian  
Nick Mohammed  
Millie Murray  
Daljit Nagra  
Karl Nova  
Shereen Pandit  
Rikin Parekh  
Woodrow Phoenix  
Smriti Prasadam-Halls  
Pooja Puri  
Ramzee  
Onjali Q Raúf  
S F Said  
Qian Shi  
Nadia Shireen  
Ranjit Singh Dhaliwal  
Chitra Soundar  
Michael de Souza  
Tammy Taylor  
Kevin Tsang  
Ken Wilson-Max

## East of England

Aisha Bushby  
(Lincolnshire)  
Sonya Hundal  
(Lincolnshire)  
John Lyons  
(Cambridgeshire)  
Mique Moriuchi

(Bedford)  
Benjamin Zephaniah  
(Lincolnshire)

## Midlands

Poonam Mistry  
(Leicester)  
Serena K Patel (Walsall)  
Bali Rai (Leicester)  
Leila Rasheed  
(Birmingham)

## Wales

Atinuke (Pembrokeshire)  
Chervelle Fryer (Cardiff)

## North West

Jan Blake (Manchester)  
Peter Kalu (Manchester)  
Tariq Mehmood  
(Manchester)

## North East

Ruth Awolola (York)  
Trish Cooke (Bradford)  
Lucy Farfort (Newcastle)  
Sharna Jackson  
(Sheffield)  
Na'ima B Robert (West  
Yorkshire)  
Anjan Sarkar (Sheffield)  
Holly Sterling  
(Sunderland)

## Scotland

Faridah Ábiké-Íyímídé

## Outside the UK

Swapna Haddow (New  
Zealand)  
Natasha Ngan (Paris)  
Madhvi Ramani (Berlin)

# Further Reading and Resources

## ABOUT DIVERSITY IN LITERATURE FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG ADULTS

### Arts Council England – Children and Young People

On this page you can download a summary of key findings from the ACE report entitled *Every child: equality and diversity in arts and culture with, by and for children and young people*:

[www.artscouncil.org.uk/funded-activities/diversity-and-equality](http://www.artscouncil.org.uk/funded-activities/diversity-and-equality)

### BookTrust

**BookTrust Represents** is a new initiative being launched by BookTrust to support and subsidise British writers and illustrators of colour:

[www.booktrust.org.uk/booktrustrepresents](http://www.booktrust.org.uk/booktrustrepresents)

BookTrust Recommendations suggest books and include a new book review every day:

[www.booktrust.org.uk/books-and-reading](http://www.booktrust.org.uk/books-and-reading)

### Centre for Literacy in Primary Education (CLPE)

CLPE's *Reflecting Realities: a Survey of Ethnic Representation within UK Children's Literature 2017* was published in 2018. You can read the full report here:

[clpe.org.uk/library-and-resources/research/reflecting-realities-survey-ethnic-representation-within-uk-children](http://clpe.org.uk/library-and-resources/research/reflecting-realities-survey-ethnic-representation-within-uk-children)

### Cooperative Children's Book Center (CCBC) USA

Children's books by and about people of colour from the USA can be found here:

[ccbc.education.wisc.edu/books/pcstats.asp](http://ccbc.education.wisc.edu/books/pcstats.asp)

### Pop Up Projects Research

Pop Up Projects have conducted two useful surveys about literacy in schools today.

*Senior Leaders Survey (2016)*:

[pop-up.org.uk/pop-up-research/pop-ups-senior-leaders-survey-2016](http://pop-up.org.uk/pop-up-research/pop-ups-senior-leaders-survey-2016)

*The Demand for Children's Books in Other Languages (2017)*:

[pop-up.org.uk/pop-up-research/the-demand-for-childrens-books-in-other-languages](http://pop-up.org.uk/pop-up-research/the-demand-for-childrens-books-in-other-languages)

### Research: *The Eight Percent Problem: Authors of Colour in the British Young Adult Market (2006–2016)*

Melanie Ramdarshan Bold's research into the young adult market in the UK, published in 2017 from UCL:

[discovery.ucl.ac.uk/10053872/](http://discovery.ucl.ac.uk/10053872/)

### Seven Stories, National Centre for Children's Books: *Diverse Voices – 50 of the Best Children's Books (2014)*

In 2014, Seven Stories, National Centre for Children's Books announced *Diverse Voices – 50 of the Best Children's Books* celebrating cultural diversity in the UK. A distinguished independent panel of experts came up with a list of 50 books for all children, from birth to teens, living in the UK today. Books published since 1950 to the present day (2014) were considered.

[www.sevenstories.org.uk/news/latestnews/diverse-voice-top-50](http://www.sevenstories.org.uk/news/latestnews/diverse-voice-top-50)

# Further Reading and Resources

## ABOUT DIVERSITY IN LIBRARIES, LITERATURE AND PUBLISHING

### Bookcareers.com Survey

These are the headline results from the bookcareers.com Salary Survey 2017, sponsored by Inspired Search & Selection Ltd. They include information on the lack of diversity in the industry:

[www.bookcareers.com/salary-survey-2/bookcareers-com-salary-survey-results-2017/](http://www.bookcareers.com/salary-survey-2/bookcareers-com-salary-survey-results-2017/)

### The Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals (CILIP)

CILIP, the UK's libraries and information association, found a lack of diversity in libraries in their 2015 survey, leading to a new Equalities and Diversity Action Plan in 2017.

2015 Survey:

[cdn.ymaws.com/www.cilip.org.uk/resource/resmgr/cilip\\_new\\_website/research/cilip\\_workforce\\_development\\_.pdf](http://cdn.ymaws.com/www.cilip.org.uk/resource/resmgr/cilip_new_website/research/cilip_workforce_development_.pdf)

2017 Equalities and Diversity Action Plan:

[archive.cilip.org.uk/news/cilip-publishes-equalities-diversity-action-plan](http://archive.cilip.org.uk/news/cilip-publishes-equalities-diversity-action-plan)

### The Royal Society of Literature (RSL)

The RSL's 2017 report on *Literature in Britain Today* can be found here. Author Bernardine Evaristo said: 'It's wonderful to see that literature is thriving in Britain. This in itself is a cause for celebration, but it is also disconcerting to see that out of the 2000 people surveyed, only 7% of the writers mentioned were Black, Asian or Mixed Race, compared to 13% of the population, and only two such writers were named by more than one respondent. The challenge of diversifying and enriching British literature so that it is truly inclusive of its multicultural

demographic is as urgent as ever. I hope that this report prompts new initiatives to publish more writers from Britain's BME communities, and to invest in marketing them to a wider readership.'

[rsliterature.org/literature-in-britain-today/](http://rsliterature.org/literature-in-britain-today/)

### Spread the Word

The important 2015 Spread the Word report *Writing the Future: Black and Asian Writers and Publishers in the Market Place* documented the lack of diversity in publishing and literature events in the UK:

[www.spreadtheword.org.uk/writing-the-future](http://www.spreadtheword.org.uk/writing-the-future)

# Our Partners



**BookTrust** is dedicated to getting children reading because we know that children who read are happier, healthier, more empathetic and more creative. Their early language development is supported and they also do better at school. Each year we reach 3.4 million children across the UK to help develop a love of reading, because we know that reading can transform lives.

We work with a variety of partners to get children excited about books, rhymes and stories. Our books are delivered via health, library, schools and early years practitioners, supported with guidance, advice and resources to encourage reading.

We want all families to have access to reading, which is why we also deliver more targeted programmes aimed at helping those who need us most — whether that's families facing economic hardship, children in care or children with additional needs.

[booktrust.org.uk](http://booktrust.org.uk)

## The Centre for Literacy in Primary Education (CLPE)

is a charity working with all those involved in teaching literacy in primary schools. Our work raises the achievement of children by helping schools to teach literacy more effectively and showing teachers how quality children's literature can be placed at the heart of all learning.



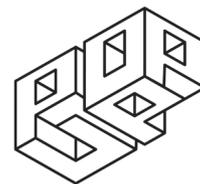
At CLPE we want to raise the literacy achievement of children by putting quality children's literature at the heart of all learning. We want to improve the life chances of children by ensuring that every child has access to quality experiences of literacy and that all teachers have the knowledge and resources to support children become confident, happy and enthusiastic readers and writers, with all the benefits this brings.

We are a small independent charity with a national and international reputation, a huge purpose and the potential to reach thousands of children.

[clpe.org.uk](http://clpe.org.uk)

## Pop Up Projects

firmly believe that access for all children and families to the broadest range of published, live and digital literature is a universal right. We facilitate access to rich and meaningful literary experiences for children and young people, schools and families — especially in diverse, deprived, isolated and otherwise challenged communities.



Working with children's authors, we develop imaginative approaches to cultivating change in reading and writing attitudes, behaviours and skills.

We also facilitate artist-led participatory and collaborative activities, which involve connecting and resourcing exceptional artists to co-create great literature and stories with children and young people, often in libraries, museums, galleries and other arts/cultural spaces.

We nurture and invest in diverse aspiring, emerging and established talent in literature, so that the next generation of published children's authors is more ethnically, culturally and linguistically diverse. This involves championing translation and multilingualism, and facilitating international connections and cultural exchange.

[pop-up.org.uk](http://pop-up.org.uk)

# Speaking Volumes

**S**peaking Volumes Live Literature Productions is a not-for-profit, producer-led independent organisation, which promotes the very best of the UK's rich diversity of literature and international writing. Formed in 2010, we have produced literary festivals, tours, events series and showcases in the UK and abroad, working with new and established authors from the widest variety of backgrounds. This includes: visits to Belgium, Finland, Germany, Portugal and Spain as part of our *Breaking Ground* Europe tour of British black, Asian and minority ethnic authors; two *Breaking Ground* tours of Black British writers to the east and west coasts of the USA; a London and UK-wide series of *Stand Up And Spit* events celebrating Ranting poetry; programmes for the European Commission; and the 2012 UK tour of Poetry Parnassus, the Southbank Centre's festival for the Cultural Olympiad.

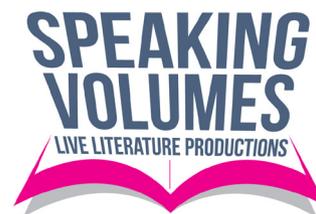
[www.speaking-volumes.org.uk](http://www.speaking-volumes.org.uk)

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