

**Levithan, David.** *Boy Meets Boy.* Knopf. Gr. 7-12 (September)

A delightfully utopian setting and a witty tone add sparkle to this tender gay romance.

**Pratchett, Terry.** *The Wee Free Men.* HarperCollins. Gr. 6-10 (July/August)

Humor and action abound as nine-year-old Tiffany finds herself allied with the Wee Free Men as she attempts to retrieve her kidnapped brother from the clutches of the Queen of the Elves.

**Wong, Janet.** *Minn and Jake;* illus. by Geneviève Côté. Foster/Farrar. Gr. 4-6 (October)

A sequence of easygoing but perceptive free-verse poems tell the story of the friendship between tall, lizard-loving Minn and short, lizard-phobic Jake.

**NONFICTION:**

**Anderson, M. T.** *Strange Mr. Satie;* illus. by Petra Mathers. Viking. Gr. 3-5 (September)

This luminous picture-book biography catches the surreal flavor of composer Erik Satie's life.

**Capuzzo, Michael.** *Close to Shore: The Terrifying Shark Attacks of 1916.* Crown. Gr. 6-10 (June)

Readers will sink their teeth into this pulse-pounding historical account of an East Coast beset by shark attacks.

**Florian, Douglas.** *Bow Wow Meow Meow: It's Rhyming Cats and Dogs;* written and illus. by Douglas Florian. Harcourt. Gr. 2-4 (April)

Florian aims his poetic whimsy, clever wordplay, and shimmering art at young pet lovers.

**Gerstein, Mordicai.** *The Man Who Walked between the Towers;* written and illus. by Mordicai Gerstein. Roaring Brook. 5-9 yrs (December)

Gerstein chronicles the performance of Philippe Petit, the wirewalker who gleefully defied the law by ropewalking between the twin towers of the World Trade Center, as both anarchic adventure and quiet tribute to the towers.

**Greenberg, Jan.** *Runaway Girl: The Artist Louise Bourgeois;* by Jan Greenberg and Sandra Jordan. Abrams. Gr. 7-12 (June)

Greenberg and Jordan create a masterpiece with a blend

of elegant bookmaking, thorough research, and insightful writing about this significant contemporary artist.

**Hampton, Wilborn.** *September 11, 2001: Attack on New York City.* Candlewick. Gr. 5-9 (January 2004)

Veteran reporter Hampton follows several different personal accounts of New Yorkers' experiences, including his own, on the fateful day.

**Murphy, Jim.** *An American Plague: The True and Terrifying Story of the Yellow Fever Epidemic of 1793.* Clarion. Gr. 5-10 (June)

Murphy's account of a city under devastating siege is both gripping and richly informative.

**Myers, Walter Dean.** *Blues Journey;* illus. by Christopher Myers. Holiday House. Gr. 3-7 (June)

Myers' blues rhapsody on African-American life draws on classic images and gains intensity from the blue-themed palette of the accompanying art.

**Rylant, Cynthia.** *God Went to Beauty School.* HarperTempest. Gr. 7-12 (July/August)

This collection of quirky free-verse poetry offers humorous, informal, and ultimately faith-filled reflections on God's interactions with the contemporary world.

**Sayre, April Pulley.** *One Is a Snail, Ten Is a Crab: A Counting by Feet Book;* by April Pulley Sayre and Jeff Sayre; illus. by Randy Cecil. Candlewick. 3-6 yrs (July/August)

An inventive approach and sprightly illustrations make this a concept book to count on.

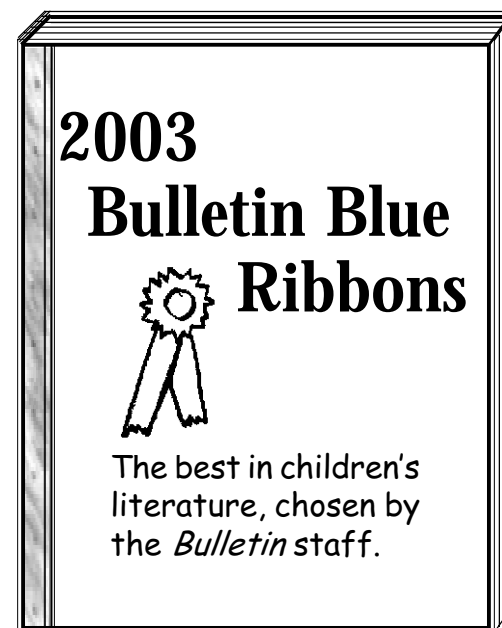
**Sidman, Joyce.** *The World according to Dog: Poems and Teen Voices;* illus. with photographs by Doug Mindell. Houghton. Gr. 6-12 (March)

Eloquent poems, compelling photography, and heartfelt tributes combine to convey the riches of canine-human friendships.

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# THE BULLETIN

OF THE CENTER FOR CHILDREN'S BOOKS



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The process for selecting the list remains the same every year—a group of contentious and opinionated professionals read the books, endlessly discuss the books, winnow down the list, and occasionally eat cake—yet each time it has its own individual characteristics and result. It's always interesting, for instance, to ponder the patterns or trends suggested by the final array. This year it's nice to see a generous helping of books for younger children as well as older; more surprisingly, the 2003 Blue Ribbons list contains a notably high proportion of upbeat and hopeful books. Is that representative of an overall trend? I don't know, but I can assure you that it's not because we've mel-  
lowed any.

—Deborah Stevenson, Editor

#### PICTURE BOOKS:

**Dunrea, Olivier.** *Ollie*; written and illus. by Olivier Dunrea. Houghton. 2-4 yrs (November)

Little gosling Ollie is endearingly willful even before he's hatched.

**Farish, Terry.** *The Cat Who Liked Potato Soup*; illus. by Barry Root. Candlewick. 5-8 yrs (June)

Understatedly poetic prose tells of an old man who finally owns up to his affection for his faithful feline friend.

**Frame, Jeron Ashford.** *Yesterday I Had the Blues*; illus. by R. Gregory Christie. Tricycle. 5-8 yrs (December)

Vivid free-verse poetry and jaunty expressionistic art explore emotions through the metaphor of color.

**Johnston, Tony.** *Go Track a Yak!*; illus. by Tim Raglin. Simon. 5-8 yrs (September)

Foolish parents accidentally interest a witch in their lovely baby, but fortunately a protective yak sets the situation to rights.

**Jones, Ursula.** *The Witch's Children*; illus. by Russell Ayto. Holt. 5-8 yrs (May)

The witch's children get themselves into humorous trouble when trying out their talents in the park.

**Lee, Ho Baek.** *While We Were Out*; written and illus. by Ho Baek Lee. Kane/Miller. 3-6 yrs (March)

Gravely comedic illustrations add charm to this story of a rabbit's adventures amid her human family's home.

**Martin, Jacqueline Briggs.** *The Water Gift and the Pig of the Pig*; illus. by Linda S. Wingerter. Houghton.

6-9 yrs (May)

A talented pig with seagoing ancestors, a grandfather with the gift of water-witching, and a jealous neighbor combine to make lyrical tale of hope (and pig) lost and regained.

**Pattison, Darcy.** *The Journey of Oliver K. Woodman*; illus. by Joe Cepeda. Harcourt. 5-9 yrs (June)

In this traveler's tale with a twist, kind strangers help wooden Oliver travel across the country, writing back to his maker about his progress.

**Perkins, Lynne Rae.** *Snow Music*; written and illus. by Lynne Rae Perkins. HarperCollins. 5-8 yrs (December)

Inventive interpretation musically evokes the sounds of animal and human life amid a snowy landscape.

**Provensen, Alice.** *A Day in the Life of Murphy*; written and illus. by Alice Provensen. Simon. 4-6 yrs (June)

This dog's-eye view of terrier Murphy's day is authentically frenetic, realistically yappy, and deliciously funny.

**Timberlake, Amy.** *The Dirty Cowboy*; illus. by Adam Rex. Farrar. Gr. 3-5 (September)

Kids who already think bathing is a farce will particularly appreciate this hilarious tale of a dirty cowboy whose bath goes awry.

**U'Ren, Andrea.** *Mary Smith*; written and illus. by Andrea U'Ren. Farrar. 4-7 yrs (September)

This historically based picture book follows "knocker-up" Mary Smith as she performs her duty of waking up various local residents—by firing her peashooter at their windows.

**Willems, Mo.** *Don't Let the Pigeon Drive the Bus!*; written and illus. by Mo Willems. Hyperion. 5-8 yrs (May)

A demanding pigeon implores the audience to let him have a forbidden spin at the wheel of a bus in this comic tour de force.

#### FICTION:

**Davis, Rebecca Fjelland.** *Jake Riley: Irreparably Damaged*. HarperTempest. Gr. 9-12 (July/August)

High-schooler Lainey is alarmed by the attentions—and then threats—of her troubled classmate, Jake, but she realizes adult intervention will likelier destroy him than help him.

**Fenner, Carol.** *Snowed In with Grandmother Silk*; illus. by Amanda Harvey. Dial. Gr. 2-4 (November)

When a sudden snowfall strands Ruddy at his prim grandmother's house, the two gradually find a new pleasure in one another's company.

**Flake, Sharon G.** *Begging for Change. Jump at the Sun/Hyperion*. Gr. 7-10 (July/August)

Raspberry's yearning to move out of her dangerous neighborhood, where her mother has been assaulted, but she's afraid she'll bring the legacy of her drug-addicted father wher ever she goes.

**French, Jackie.** *Hitler's Daughter*. HarperCollins. Gr. 6-10 (July/August)

A contemporary Australian girl weaves an eerily convincing story about a secret daughter of Hitler that has her friends asking questions about history.

**Going, K. L.** *Fat Kid Rules the World*. Putnam. Gr. 9-12 (June)

Under the guidance of a charismatic but down-on-his-luck musician, Troy Billings begins to transform himself—and his view of himself—from fat nothing to punk music phenomenon.

**Hidier, Tanuja Desai.** *Born Confused*. Scholastic. Gr. 9-12 (February)

In a clever, rich, and funny narrative, seventeen-year-old Dimple Lala, a talented photographer, realizes that her Asian Indian heritage isn't something to evade.

**Jenkins, A. M.** *Out of Order*. HarperCollins. Gr. 7-12 (October)

Jenkins deftly and sensitively depicts the viewpoint of an unthinking, academics-hating ballplayer who is beginning, painfully and sadly, to get some flashes of self-knowledge.

**Kimmel, Haven.** *Orville: A Dog Story*; illus. by Robert Andrew Parker. Clarion. Gr. 3-7 (November)

In this compact, invitingly illustrated narrative, a big ugly dog finally finds the home for which he yearns and fulfills a few human hopes along the way.

**Koja, Kathe.** *Buddha Boy*. Foster/Farrar. Gr. 6-10 (June)

Though initially confused by the weird new kid's name, Jinsen, and his passive response to bullying, Justin is compelled by Jinsen's art and, when he learns it, his history.