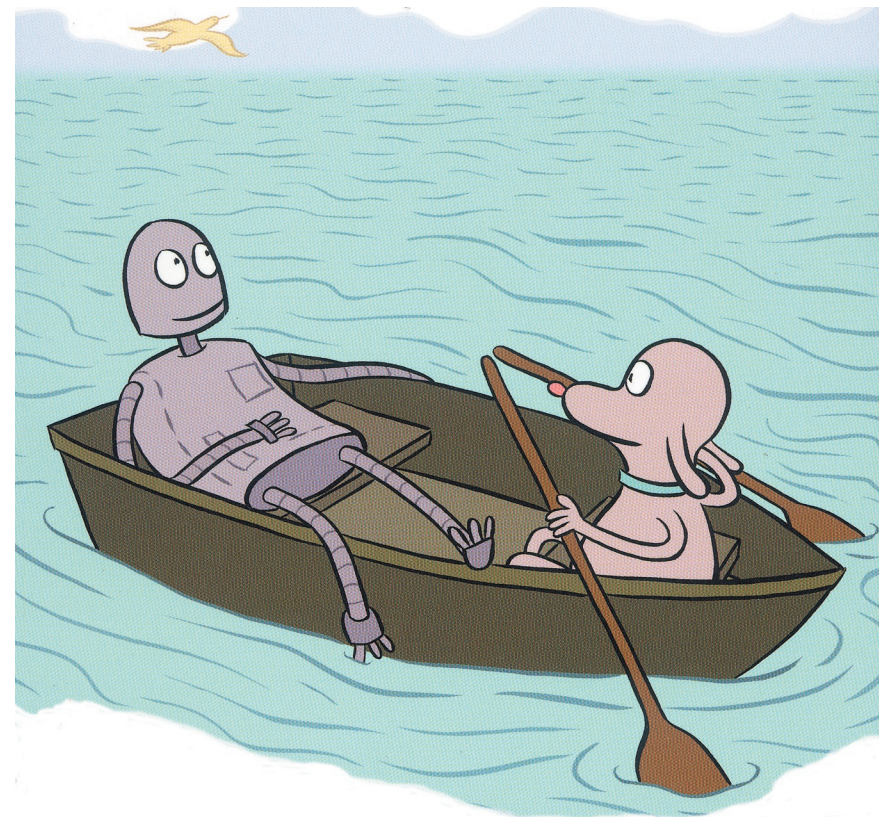


Association of Children's Librarians  
of Northern California

# Distinguished Books

2007



Association of Children's Librarians  
of Northern California  
P. O. Box 12471  
Berkeley, CA 94712

Notes

Association of Children's Librarians  
of Northern California  
**Distinguished Books**  
2007



*Titles have been selected from those  
reviewed in BayViews for  
their outstanding literary merit,  
high quality of illustration and  
design, and contribution to a child's  
understanding of the world.*

**Distinguished Books reviewed by ACL:**

**Non-fiction**

**Folklore**

**Poetry**

**Biography**

**Fiction**

**Graphic Novels**

**Readers**

**Picture Books**



**ACL DISTINGUISHED BOOKS**  
2007

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## Notes

## Non-fiction



Ancona, George

*Capoeira*

Photographs by the author

Lee & Low, 2007

\$18.95

Grades 2-6

Featuring many photos from a real capoeira academy in Oakland, CA, Ancona gives a lively and thorough introduction to the history and movements of this game/dance/martial art form.

Arnold, Caroline and Madeleine Comora

*Taj Mahal*

Illus. by Rahul Bhushan

Carolrhoda, 2007

\$17.95

Grades 6- Adult

The legendary Indian love story takes center stage in this beautifully illustrated book. The well-written text comes together with the images to convey the culture and time period of the building.

Aston, Dianna Hutts

*A Seed Is Sleepy*

Illus. by Sylvia Long

Chronicle, 2007

\$16.99

Grades 1-Adult

This stunning, introductory science book focuses on the common characteristics of seeds. The watercolor illustrations are framed by the poetic cursive text and by the more scientific text in plain font. Bay Area readers will be pleased by the two-page spread on the Coast Redwood.

Bishop, Nic

*Nic Bishop Spiders*

Photographs by the author

Scholastic, 2007

\$17.99

Grades 1-5

Here are spiders molting, mating, eating, wrapping their next meal and, in a wonderful gate-fold section, jumping from one leaf to another. Children and adults will pore over each photo and exclaim with disgust or delight.

Bryan, Ashley

*Let It Shine: Three Favorite Spirituals*

Illus. by the author

Atheneum, 2007

\$16.99

Grades K-3

African-American spirituals are laid out as the text of this picture book. The colorful illustrations made from cut-out construction paper silhouettes add universality to the message.

Curlee, Lynn

*Skyscraper*

Illus. by the author

Atheneum, 2007

\$17.99

Grades 3-5

Curlee's brief history of skyscrapers, complete with a chart comparing different skyscrapers by height, makes architecture exciting to even a casual reader. His distinctive acrylic illustrations are well suited to the topic.

Giblin, James Cross

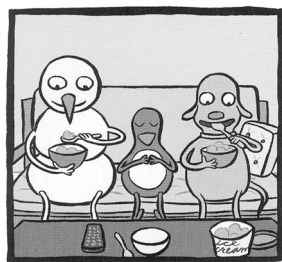
*The Many Rides of Paul Revere*

Scholastic, 2007

\$17.99

Grades 5-9

Liberally illustrated with prints and photos of his metal craft, a well-rounded portrait of the Revolutionary hero is presented in this handsome oversized book.



Jenkins, Steve

*Dogs and Cats*

Illus. by the author

Houghton, 2007

\$16.00

Grades K-5

Jenkins' cut and torn-paper collage illustrations and flip-the-book design make a highly appealing book about two favorite pets.

Murphy, Clare Rudolf

*Children of Alcatraz: Growing Up on the Rock*

Walker, 2006

\$17.95

Grades 4-8

The phrase "one-of-a-kind childhood" describes the lives of the children of prison guards, lighthouse keepers, Native Americans, and military soldiers who grew up on "the Rock." Memorable photos accompany this fascinating history.

Raschka, Chris

*The Purple Balloon*

Illus. by the author

Schwartz & Wade, 2007

\$16.99

Grades 1-Adult

Raschka sensitively introduces the topic of death through simple potato and wood water color prints. This brief book is an excellent choice for those who want to lend assistance to a child about a difficult subject.

## Association of Children's Librarians of Northern California

P. O. Box 12471, Berkeley, CA 94712

[www.bayviews.org](http://www.bayviews.org)

ACL has been serving librarians, teachers, and booksellers in Northern California since the 1930s. Members meet monthly to review books for young people and discuss related issues. ACL's book review journal, *BayViews*, is published 11 times a year.

### Membership in ACL offers:

- subscription to *BayViews*, which prints reviews of more than 1,800 new books each year
- annual annotated *Distinguished Books* list
- opportunity to review and discuss current children's books
- special bibliographies
- notices of job opportunities
- opportunity to discuss current issues in library service to children
- discounted attendance at the annual Performers' Showcase
- discounted attendance at the annual Institute
- professional development and networking opportunities

Meetings are held from 9 a.m. to noon on the second Friday of each month, excluding the month of the annual Institute, at an area library. Check the website for meeting locations. In the Spring, ACL sponsors an Institute about library service to children and topics of interest to librarians and teachers.

### I would like to become a member of ACL

- ☐ Standard rate \$50      ☐ Retirees \$40  
☐ Student rate \$20

Make check payable to *Association of Children's Librarians*

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Please mail to: ACL Membership, P. O. Box 12471, Berkeley, CA 94712



## Acknowledgements

Books are designated as “distinguished” through a process of nomination, discussion, and voting by members of the Association of Children’s Librarians.

Grade designations in the annotations are approximate.  
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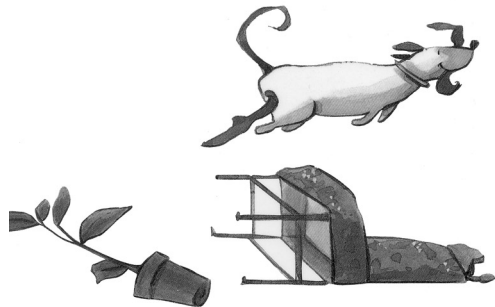
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The Distinguished Books Committee for 2007 was chaired by:  
denise schmidt, San Francisco Public Library  
Claire Sue, Benicia Public Library



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ACL Distinguished Books, P. O. Box 12471, Berkeley, CA 94712.

Rumford, James

*Beowulf: a Hero’s Tale Retold*

Illus. by the author

Houghton, 2007

\$17.00

Grades 5-8

Wonderful pen and ink and watercolor illustrations, evocative prose, and skillful bookbinding make this the perfect introduction to Beowulf.

Schlitz, Laura Amy

*Good Masters! Sweet Ladies! Voices from a Medieval Village*

Illus. by Robert Byrd

Candlewick, 2007

\$19.99

Grades 5-9

In monologues and two-voice dialogues, Schlitz has created perfectly crafted voices of 22 distinct medieval youths. Between their stories reflecting diverse levels of society are informational chapters about life in 13th-century England and charming illustrations.

Schwartz, David and Yael Schy

*Where in the Wild? Camouflaged Creatures Concealed...*

*and Revealed*

Photographs by Dwight Kuhn

Tricycle, 2007

\$15.95

Grades K-4

Ten creatures that use camouflage are introduced with creative poems and informational paragraphs. Colorful double-page photographs employ a creative technique to show their hidden shapes.

Spitz, Bob

*Yeah! Yeah! Yeah! The Beatles, Beatlemania, and the*

*Music That Changed the World*

Little, 2007

\$18.99

Grades 7-12

Pairing a wealth of b/w photos with an enthusiastic text that doesn’t ignore their faults, Spitz describes the history and influence of the Fab Four on music and pop culture.



## Folklore

Hong, Chen Jiang

*The Magic Horse of Han Gan*

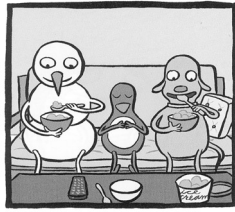
Illus. by Chen Jiang Hong

Enchanted Lion, 2006

\$16.95

Grades 1-5

Just as his horses burst into life, the legend of Han Gan comes alive in this wonderful story. The illustrations jump from the page, and the story, though simple, is profound without being didactic.



MacDonald, Margaret Read

*The Great Smelly, Slobbery, Small-Tooth Dog*

Illus. by Julie Pashkis

August House, 2007

\$16.95

Grades 1-3

In this British version of *Beauty and the Beast*, the beast is just a great smelly dog, but he still holds a beautiful daughter captive until she learns to respect him. Lovely artwork and a readable text make this a winning folktale.

Zwerger, Lisbeth

*The Bremen Town Musicians*

Illus. by the author

Penguin, 2007

\$16.99

Grades 1-4

A graceful prose retelling of the Grimm classic about four down-on-their-luck animals who band together to survive. The quirky illustrations bring out the individual personalities of the animals.



## Poetry

Florian, Douglas

*Comets, Stars, the Moon, and Mars*

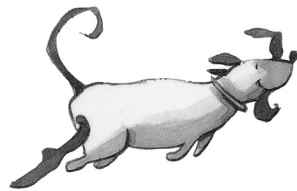
Illus. by the author

Harcourt, 2007

\$16.00

Grades K-4

Twenty humorous rhymes celebrate the Solar System, including "Pluto was a planet. Pluto was admired. Pluto was a planet. Till one day it got fired." The poet's equally engaging illustrations, in gouache on brown paper bags with collage elements, make this a great book for an astronomy class.



Yoo, Taeun.

*The Little Red Fish*

Illus. by the author

Dial, 2007

\$15.99

Grades K-2

When JeJe falls asleep between the library stacks with his little red fish beside him, strange wonderful adventures await them. The detailed pen and ink, sepia-toned illustrations are marked by bright red flashes that draw readers into this fantastic tale.

Floca, Brian

*Lightship*

Illus. by the author

Atheneum, 2007

\$16.99

Grades Pre-1

Although this is a picture book, Floca provides enough details so that one understands the purpose of lightships. His watercolor and ink illustrations tilt to mimic the movement of the boat.

Global Fund for Children

*Global Babies*

Charlesbridge, 2007

\$6.95

Grades Tod-Pre

Close-up color photos of babies, set on deeply colored pages and captioned with a word or two celebrating the love of babies around the world, make this a memorable and marvelous board book.

Levine, Ellen

*Henry's Freedom Box, A True Story from the*

*Underground Railroad*

Illus. by Kadir Nelson

Scholastic, 2007

\$16.99

Grades 2-5

Inspired by an actual 1830s lithograph, this stunning book relates Henry "Box" Brown's harrowing escape from slavery in a packing crate. Nelson's illustrations capture Brown's despair and determination and the triumph of his journey to freedom.

Seeger, Laura Vaccaro

*Dog and Bear: Two Friends, Three Stories*

Illus. by the author

Roaring Brook, 2007

\$12.95

Grades Pre-1

Seeger's warm, colorful line and watercolor wash illustrations complement three tales about Dog and Bear. The text, a mix of a beginning reader and a picture book, is gentle and humorous.

Seeger, Laura Vaccaro

*First the Egg*

Illus. by the author

Roaring Brook, 2007

\$14.95

Grades Pre-K

Using classic die-cut pages and bold illustrations, Seeger creates another fresh concept book. Tackling the ideas of growth and change here, she successfully crafts a vibrant and fun read-aloud for preschoolers.

Ruddell, Deborah

*Today at the Bluebird Café: A Branchful of Birds*

Illus. by Joan Rankin

Simon & Schuster, 2007

\$15.99

Grades K-4

This is a strong collection of whimsical, comical, and imaginative poems that, along with luminous watercolor artwork, pay homage to a wide variety of our feathered friends.

Weatherford, Carol Boston

*Birmingham, 1963*

Wordsong, 2007

\$17.95

Grades 5-7

Weatherford's verse and well-chosen photographs are a powerful tribute to those who died in the Sixteenth Street Baptist Church bombing.

## Biography

Barakat, Ibtisam

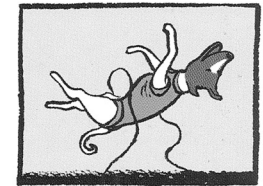
*Tasting the Sky—A Palestinian Childhood*

Farrar, 2007

\$16.00

Grades 5-8

Barakat writes a powerful memoir of her childhood in Palestine during the Six-Day War. This glimpse of childhood shattered by war also shows the redeeming gift of language as she learns to read and write.



Fradin, Judith and Dennis Brindell Fradin

*Jane Addams: Champion of Democracy*

Clarion, 2006

\$21.00

Grades 6-10

The Fradins' engaging, fully informative account of Addams' life is well documented with plenty of bibliographic notes. Their study provides photographs of Addams and her cohorts, of Hull House, and scenes from her life and times.

Sis, Peter

*The Wall: Growing Up Behind the Iron Curtain*

Illus. by the author

Farrar, 2007

\$18.00

Grades 6-Adult

This captivating autobiographical picture book details Sis's life from infancy through young adulthood in Czechoslovakia under Soviet rule. Detailed pen and ink illustrations and concise text bring to life a unique period of world history.



## Fiction



Alexie, Sherman

*The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-time Indian*

Illus. by Ellen Forney

Little, 2007

\$16.99

Grades 7-Adult

Junior, a Spokane Indian, tells the raw truth about life on and off the rez.

Cartoon drawings add snapshots of humor to this illuminating story about one teenager's drive to succeed despite formidable obstacles.

Bingham, Kelly

*Shark Girl*

Candlewick, 2007

\$16.99

Grades 6-10

First-time author Bingham provides a tightly crafted, emotionally charged story about a girl who loses her right arm above the elbow after a shark attack.

Curtis, Christopher Paul

*Elijah of Buxton*

Scholastic, 2007

\$16.99

Grades 4-8

Elijah is the first child born into freedom in Buxton, Canada, a community of former slaves. His coming-of-age story moves from laugh-out-loud foolishness to chilling encounters with slavery.

Doyle, Brian

*Pure Spring*

Groundwood, 2007

\$16.95

Grades 8-11

In this sequel to *Boy O'Boy*, Martin has finally found a home, a job (even though he has to lie about his age), and has fallen in love. All is jeopardized though when his boss discovers Martin's lie and blackmails him into becoming a partner in criminal activities.

Ellis, Deborah

*I Am a Taxi*

Groundwood, 2006

\$16.95

Grades 5-8

Diego, 12, lives with his mom in a women's prison in Cochabamba, Bolivia and runs errands for prisoners, as a "taxi." When he tries a quick money-making scheme to help his family, he finds himself enslaved in the jungle.

## Readers

Willems, Mo

*My Friend Is Sad*

*There Is a Bird on Your Head!*

*Today I Will Fly!*

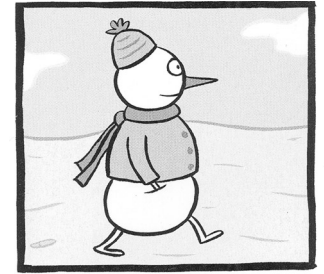
Illus. by the author

Hyperion, 2007

\$8.99 each

Grades K-2

Gerald the Elephant and Piggie the Pig star in this series of very easy readers, combining dialogue balloons with Willems' pastel cartoons set on white backgrounds. The warm, funny stories focus on friendship and are told with very spare text and expressive characterizations.



## Picture Books

Bunting, Eve

*Pop's Bridge*

Illus. by C.F. Payne

Harcourt, 2006

\$17.00

Grades K-3

Robert and Charlie watch from Fort Point each day as their fathers work on the Golden Gate Bridge in San Francisco in the 1930s. Expressive illustrations and messages of friendship and courage highlight this story.

Coffelt, Nancy

*Fred Stays with Me!*

Illus. by Tricia Tusa

Little, 2007

\$16.99

Grades Pre-2

A young girl sets her divorced parents straight when they insist her dog can no longer stay with either of them. Soft brown watercolors complement the warm tale.

Cole, Brock

*Good Enough to Eat*

Illus. by the author

Farrar, 2007

\$16.00

Grades K-5

When an ogre demands that a town provide him with a maiden or face destruction, they decide to send out a poor homeless waif. Rather than despair at her continuing bad luck, this plucky heroine manages to get the better of both the ogre and the townsfolk.

Woodson, Jacqueline

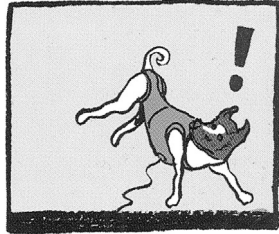
*Feathers*

Putnam, 2007

\$15.99

Grades 5-8

When a new white student nicknamed “Jesus Boy” enters Frannie’s 6th grade class in the winter of 1971, her friendship with him helps her to see things in a new light.



## Graphic Novels

Abadzis, Nick

*Laika*

Illus. by the author

First Second, 2007

\$17.95

Grades 7-Adult

Historical fact and fiction meld in this graphic novel about Laika, a stray dog who became the Earth’s first space traveler aboard *Sputnik II*. The author raises complex issues without sacrificing first-rate storytelling.

Lat

*Town Boy*

Illus. by the author

First Second, 2007

\$16.95

Grades 7-12

In this graphic novel follow-up to *Kampung Boy*, Mat moves from his quiet village to the city of Ipoh to enter boarding school. Using inky cartoon caricatures and pithy captions, Lat describes Mat’s new friends, the school marching band, and his first date.

Tan, Shaun

*The Arrival*

Illus. by the author

Scholastic, 2007

\$19.99

Grades 8-Adult

A man seeking a better life for himself and his family emigrates to a surreal new land in this fascinating, wordless, large-format graphic novel.

Varon, Sara

*Robot Dreams*

Illus. by the author

First Second, 2007

\$16.95

Grades 4-12

A wordless graphic novel starts with the simple premise of a dog building a robot. Unfortunately, when Robot rusts after a day at the beach, Dog abandons him and they spend several months trying to reunite in this poignant story of friendship.

Kinney, Jeff

*Diary of a Wimpy Kid: A Novel in Cartoons*

Illus. by the author

Amulet, 2007

\$12.95

Grades 4-8

Greg Heffley records the painfully hilarious minutiae of middle school life in his journal. The handwritten text and clever cartoon drawings are right on the mark for tweens and will win over even reluctant male readers.

Klages, Ellen

*The Green Glass Sea*

Penguin, 2006

\$16.99

Grades 4-8

In 1943, Dewey moves to the New Mexico desert with her father who is working on a top secret government project. While working on tinkering projects of her own, Dewey learns about friendship and loss.

Knox, Elizabeth

*Dreamhunter: Book One of the Dreamhunter Duet*

Farrar, 2006

\$19.00

Grades 8-12

In a society dominated by the Place, a mysterious realm in which dreams can be caught, two young cousins aspire to be dreamhunters. Well-developed characters and a multi-layered plot that evolves in unexpected ways will attract fantasy fans.

McCaughrean, Geraldine

*Cyrano*

Harcourt, 2006

\$16.00

Grades 9-Adult

A retelling of Rostand’s play in prose, *Cyrano* shows the deep love, great style, heartbreak, and eloquence of the man with the big nose.

McCormick, Patricia

*Sold*

Hyperion, 2006

\$15.99

Grades 8-Adult

Using lovely free verse, this gut-wrenching book tells the story of a 13-year-old Nepalese girl, Lakshmi, who is sold by her stepfather into a prostitution house in Calcutta.

Mourlevat, Jean-Claude

*The Pull of the Ocean*

Delacorte, 2006

\$13.95

Grades 6-10

With each chapter narrated by a different witness, a tale unfolds of mute Yann Doutreleau and his six elder brothers who escape their abusive parents and head towards the sea. Echoes of the tale of Tom Thumb add additional layers to this intriguing story.

Noyes, Deborah

*Restless Dead*

Candlewick, 2007 \$16.99 Grades 7-12

Ten notable young adult authors, including M. T. Anderson and Libba Bray, contribute short stories of the supernatural to a spellbinding anthology that will appeal to teens.

Peet, Mal

*Tamar*

Candlewick, 2007 \$17.99 Grades 9-Adult

After the suicide of her grandfather, Tamar uncovers his dangerous past working in the Dutch resistance during World War II. She also unravels the story of the friends he betrayed in order to win the woman he loved.

Perkins, Mitali

*Rickshaw Girl*

Illus. by Jamie Hogan

Charlesbridge, 2007 \$13.95 Grades 2-5

A young girl challenges traditional women's roles when she uses her artistic talents to raise money for her struggling family. Black and white sketches of Bangladeshi daily life complement the simple yet engaging narrative.

Reinhardt, Dana

*Harmless*

Random, 2007 \$15.99 Grades 6-10

In order to avoid getting in trouble over their true whereabouts one night, three high school girlfriends concoct a lie about being accosted near the town river-side.

Resau, Laura

*What the Moon Saw*

Delacorte, 2006 \$15.95 Grades 5-9

Clara Luna journeys from the suburbs of Maryland to the remotest part of Oaxaca to visit her father's parents and finds a part of herself she did not know was missing.

Rowling, J. K.

*Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows*

Scholastic, 2007 \$34.99 Grades 5-Adult

Some friends are lost, and Harry has to take the last steps toward accepting completely who he is. Many threads are satisfyingly wrapped up as Harry confronts Voldemort for the last time.

Roy, Jennifer

*Yellow Star*

M. Cavendish, 2006 \$16.95 Grades 4-8

Roy gives youth a moving memoir of her aunt, Sylvia, who was one of only 12 children to survive in the Lodtz ghetto during World War II. The simple free verse narrative has a consistent child voice that will appeal to readers of *Anne Frank: The Diary of a Young Girl*.

Schmidt, Gary D.

*The Wednesday Wars*

Houghton, 2007 \$16.00 Grades 5-8

Holling Hollinghood reads Shakespeare with his 7th grade teacher during the Vietnam War era while dealing with his wannabe Peacenik sister, cream puffs, and yellow tights.

Selznick, Brian

*The Invention of Hugo Cabret*

Illus. by the author

Scholastic, 2007 \$22.99 Grades 3-7

Stunningly told in words, illustrations, and period movie stills, this is the story of an orphan who, while tending to the clocks in a Paris train station in 1931, meets a toymaker who may just be famed French filmmaker Georges Melies.

Thompson, Kate

*The New Policeman*

Greenwillow, 2007 \$16.99 Grades 7-12

Irish teenager J. J. Liddy discovers that time is leaking from his world into Tir na n'Og, the land of the fairies. As he attempts to stop the leak, he discovers family history, a crime his great-grandfather may or may not have committed, and rediscovers the music that he has loved all his life.

Weaver, Will

*Defect*

Farrar, 2007 \$16.00 Grades 8-12

David has bug eyes, large ears, squashed features and a secret—he has wings. Starting at an alternative school, he finds acceptance and love. Once his secret is revealed, David has a choice—to be remade or stay the same.