Jane Addams Peace Association

Announces Winners of the 2019 Jane Addams Children’s Book Award

Jane Addams Children’s Book Award Honoring Books on Peace, Social Justice, and Equity Since 1953

New York, NY — May 15, 2019 — Today the Jane Addams Peace Association announced the 2019 recipients of the Jane Addams Children’s Book Award. The Jane Addams Children’s Book Award annually recognizes children’s books of literary and aesthetic excellence that effectively engage children in thinking about peace, social justice, global community, and equity for all people. The award recipients are chosen by a Selection Committee of educators and librarians from across the United States who read, evaluate, and discuss hundreds of books. The 2019 Jane Addams Children’s Book Award will be presented on October 18th in New York City. The Hastings Peace and Justice Fund funds the Jane Addams Children’s Book Award and its annual ceremony in loving memory of Mrs. Wolcott B. Dunham.


**The Day You Begin** demonstrates the power of sharing stories to break down barriers and build community. The Selection Committee noted that “the lovely, lyrical lilt of Woodson’s unrhymed verse cradles young readers as they bear witness to explicit othering.”

**Ghost Boys**, the Winner in the Books for Older Children Category is a timely and haunting depiction of two African American boys who die before reaching manhood, victims of violence. Drawing on traditions that view ancestors as guides to the living, author Parker Rhodes imagines these dead boys as healers righting the wrongs of this world. This complex work of magical realism leaves readers wondering about what might have been if these ‘ghost boys’ and others had lived to adulthood. The book imagines a young Emmett Till as a guide to one of these boys and provides the reader with a context to understand the historical nature of the fear-based violence against black men and boys.

Two Honor Books were named in the Books for Younger Children Category.

**The Day War Came** by Nicola Davies, illustrated by Rebecca Cobb, and published by Candlewick is inspired by real events. It begins in a most ordinary way with a family sharing breakfast before school, but their ordinary routines are interrupted when the war comes. The simple but moving text, coupled with the child-like colored pencil and watercolor illustrations, powerfully communicates the plight of an unidentified and unnamed child refugee displaced by war. She flees with others, on a truck and in a leaky boat, looking for safety and help, as people turn away. This uncomplicated portrayal of the refugee crisis invites conversations about empathy and inclusivity.

To deepen understanding of peace and justice for children and their adults through reflection, dialogue and social action.

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**Julián is a Mermaid**, written and illustrated by Jessica Love, and published by Candlewick, tenderly distills a profound human truth—we each need to be seen and loved for ourselves—in a deceptively simple way. After a transformative trip to the local swimming pool and a subway ride home with what appear to be mermaids, Julián explains to his loving abuela that he is also a mermaid. She helps Julián reveal his inner self in a resplendent mermaid parade on the beach. The strength and heart of the book are in how the story is told in minimal text, with luminous illustrations. Julián’s revelation celebrates the diversity of the human race, gender expression, and people of all body types and colors.

Two Honor Books were named in the Books for Older Children category.

**The Night Diary** by Veera Hiranandani, and published by Kokila, an imprint of Penguin Young Readers, vividly shows the impact of India’s partition in 1947 as the political events in one country become personal. Twelve-year-old Nisha records her observations in a diary written to her deceased mother as her home becomes unsafe for her family, and they flee across the desert, seeking solace with her maternal uncle and then later with her father’s family. The daughter of a Muslim mother and a Hindu father, Nisha gains strength from her writing and her cooking, but is shocked into silence at one point, finding her voice, losing it, and finding it again as she takes tentative steps toward a future in a world that is nothing like her beloved homeland.

**We Rise, We Resist, We Raise Our Voices**, edited by Wade Hudson and Cheryl Willis Hudson, published by Crown Books for Young Readers, an imprint of Random House Children’s Books in partnership with Just Us Books, is an empowering anthology that encourages resilience when “the world feels upside down.” Budding social activists looking for inspiration and ways to rise up, resist the status quo, and raise their voices in harmony as they seek to change the world will find plenty of inspiration in the thirty different pieces featured here. Written by diverse authors, the poems, essays, stories and letters, many portraying personal struggles, reflect a universal portrait of humanity. Intensified by the unique artwork of twenty-two artists, each page celebrates diversity and shines a light on life’s daily complexities.

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For more information on Jane Addams Peace Association or Jane Addams Children’s Book Award visit:  
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