



PRESS RELEASE

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Contact: Courtney Richardson, Director of Education and Public Programs (978)283-0455 x12

courtneyrichardson@capeannmuseum.org and/or



Once Upon a Contest: Selections from Cape Ann Reads

A special exhibition celebrating local children's book authors and illustrators

GLOUCESTER, Mass. (December 14, 2018) – The Cape Ann Museum is pleased to present *Once Upon a Contest: Selections from Cape Ann Reads*, a ground breaking show on view until February 24, 2019, stemming from the country's first children's picture book contest hosted by four public libraries. The exhibition brings special attention to award-winning local artists and writers and the art of children's picture books. There will be an opening celebration on Saturday, January 5 from 3:00 – 5:00 p.m. This program is free for Museum members, Cape Ann Residents or with Museum admission. For more information visit capeannmuseum.org or call 978-283-0455 x10.

Once Upon a Contest was drawn from manuscripts recognized for distinction during the Cape Ann Reads 2017 original picture book competition. The special group show was organized and circulated by curator, Catherine Ryan, with support from the Bruce J Anderson Foundation | The Boston Fund. Visitors will find picture books created by traditional author-illustrators (individuals who create both text and illustrations), friends and family pairings, repeat partnerships, volunteer match ups, self-taught and master artists, storytellers, published authors, and educators. The exhibit features work by: Leslie Galacar, Martha Shaw Geraghty, Marion Hall, Steven Kennedy, Charles King, George King, Michael LaPenna, James McKenna, Barbara McLaughlin, Alexia Parker, Victoria Petway, Jim Plunkett, Diane Polley, Mary Rhineland, James Seavey, Gail Seavey, Kim Smith, Christina Ean Spangler, Bonnie L. Sylvester, Juni VanDyke, Maura Wadlinger, Betty Allenbrook Wiberg, Kirsten Allenbrook Wiberg, Jean Woodbury, and Claire Wyzenbeek. For a few, inclusion in this show will mark their debut display at a museum. The works on view range from preliminary mock ups and unfinished pages to final published illustrations for original books. They cover diverse themes and points of view and provide glimpses into stories and methodologies. The exhibition will include a reading nook for visitors of all ages.

Cape Ann Reads came about in 2015 when the four public libraries on Cape Ann --Gloucester Lyceum & Sawyer Free Public Library; Manchester by the Sea Public Library; TOHP Burnham Public Library, Essex; and Rockport Public Library-- began to work together to encourage and highlight community creativity, regional collaboration, and family literacy through a focus on children's picture books. "A passion for writing literature and the arts is one thing that ties all four communities together making Cape Ann Reads a meaningful collaboration between our four libraries and the Cape Ann Museum," explained Cindy Grove, Director, Rockport Public Library. During the first year of implementation, the collaborating public libraries and Cape Ann Museum offered innovative monthly programming and free picture book themed workshops for families and adults as a vehicle for family literacy, a work of art and literature, and a form of engagement and recreation. The vibrant endeavor culminated in a public art call, Cape Ann Creates for Cape

Ann Reads. "What an opportunity for a talented individual or individuals to produce a lasting piece of literature with such special meaning," exclaimed Deborah French, Director, T.O.H.P. Burnham Library, Essex.

Scores of Cape Ann creatives responded to this open call for a chance to win a first edition printing. In fact, so much interest occurred that a writer's group led by Gloucester Writers Center was established, and volunteer artists and writers stepped up to help people without a partner. Two jury panels selected Gulliver, Honor and Medal books in the spring of 2017.

GULLIVER BOOKS: ****"The Prince of Winter,"* written by Martha Shaw Geraghty and illustrated by John Plunkett; ****"Jimbo and His Mustache,"* written by Steven Kennedy and illustrated by Victoria Petway; ****"The Best Way Home,"* written and illustrated by Barbara McLaughlin; *"Beauty on the Wing,"* written and illustrated by Kim Smith; *"Bike's Big Adventure,"* written by Charles King and illustrated by Alexia Parker; *"Henrietta's Moon Egg,"* written and illustrated by Claire Wyzenbeek; *"If I were a Moose,"* and *"If I were a Lion"* written by James McKenna and illustrated by Juni Van Dyke; *"Above Water: Three Flood Stories, Four Faiths,"* written by Gail Seavey and illustrated by James Seavey; *"Where in the World is Catherine Abigail?,"* written by Michael LaPenna and illustrated by Leslie Galacar; *"Small Elephant or Small One,"* written by Kirsten Allenbrook Wiberg and illustrated by Betty Allenbrook Wiberg; *"Pumpkin Carving,"* written by George King and illustrated by Alexia Parker.

HONOR BOOKS: *"Let's Go! Animal Tracks in the Snow,"* written by Diane Polley and illustrated by Marion Hall; *"Why does my dog sniff other dogs' butts? (and other important questions),"* written and illustrated by Mary Rhineland; *"Faraway Grammie,"* written by Maura Wadlinger and illustrated by Christina Ean Spangler.

MEDAL BOOK: *"The Tree in Dock Square,"* written by Jean Woodbury and illustrated by Bonnie L. Sylvester.

*****Received Cape Ann Reads 2017 Kids Compliment Certificate**

The jury panel included librarians, acclaimed children's book author-illustrators and a rare books dealer: Carol Bender, Pat Lowery Collins, Ann Cowman, Kate Strong Stadt, Giles Laroche, Bob Ritchie, Justine Vitale, Anna Vojtech, and April Wanner. Five children served on the kids panel. A reception and book fair was held in Gloucester's City Hall in January 2018 thanks to Mayor Sefatia Romeo-Theken. Original sculpture trophies of the bespectacled Cape Ann Reads mascot, "Gulliver", by fine artist Jason Burroughs, were presented to the Honor and Medal book recipients. Cape Ann Reads continues to foster connections among the children's picture book network, and generate business. Six books have been self-published, reviewed, and sold in local stores.

"The Cape Ann Museum is pleased to launch this important Cape Ann Reads exhibition just as it was to kick off the first Cape Ann Reads program with the Eric Carle Museum back in January 2016," said Ronda Faloon, Director Cape Ann Museum. The Museum scheduled the exhibition to coincide with the major Virginia Lee Burton retrospective, *The Little House: Her Story*, and the month of January when the Museum is free to area residents. The legacy of Burton is an inspiration for many Cape Ann Reads participants.

Once Upon a Contest opens in December 2018 and continues until February 24, 2019. Following its launch at the Cape Ann Museum, the exhibition will tour the four communities of Cape Ann throughout 2019 as follows: Manchester in April, Essex in May-June, Gloucester in August-September, and Rockport in October-November.

In addition to the opening reception on Saturday, January 5, 2019, the Cape Ann Museum will offer weekly storytime with Museum staff and guest readers on Wednesdays at 4:00 p.m. through March 31, 2019. This program is free and open to the public. On Saturday, January 12 from 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. children and their families are invited to enjoy the special exhibition and participate in hands on art making and writing activities. This program is free and open to the public. During February school vacation week, the Museum will host children's book creation workshops for school age students from 1:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m. on Tuesday, February 19 through Friday, February 22. These workshops are \$15 for CAM Members or \$25 nonmembers. To register contact Sarah Flanagan at 978-283-0455 x16 or email sarahflanagan@capeannmuseum.org.



Image credits: A Community Effort

(top left) The four Library Directors of Cape Ann announcing "Gulliver," the public's name choice for the Cape Ann Reads mascot (left to right: Deb French, TOHP Burnham; Cindy Grove, Rockport; Deborah Kelsey, Gloucester; Sara Collins, Manchester), July 2016.

(top right) Cape Ann Reads kids jury selection panel (left to right: Josie, Alycia, Eli, Lucas, John). Deliberations were held at Cape Ann Museum, March 2017.

(bottom left) Bonnie L. Sylvester, illustrator (left) and Jean Woodbury, author (right) of *The Tree in Dock Square*, the first Cape Ann Reads Medal book, June 2017.

(bottom right) Claire Wyzenbeek (author and illustrator *Henrietta's Moon Egg*) at her booth for Cape Ann Reads children's picture book awards reception and book fair, January 27, 2018, City Hall Gloucester MA. ©Linda Bosselman.

Page 1 image credits: Details from book illustrations by the following (left to right): Claire Wzenbeek, Victoria Petway, Barbara McLaughlin.

About the Cape Ann Museum

The Cape Ann Museum has been in existence since the 1870s, working to preserve and celebrate the history and culture of the area and to keep it relevant to today's audiences. Spanning 44,000 square feet, the Museum is one of the major cultural institutions on Boston's North Shore welcoming more than 25,000 local, national and international visitors each year to its exhibitions and programs. In addition to fine art, the Museum's collections include decorative art, textiles, artifacts from the maritime and granite industries, two historic homes and a sculpture park in the heart of downtown Gloucester. Visit capeannmuseum.org for details.

The Museum is located at 27 Pleasant Street in Gloucester. Hours are Tuesday through Saturday from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., and Sundays from 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. Admission is \$12.00 adults, \$10.00 Cape Ann residents, seniors and students. Youth (under 18) and Museum members are free. For more information please call: (978)283-0455 x10. Additional information can be found online at www.capeannmuseum.org.

For a detailed media fact sheet please visit www.capeannmuseum.org/press.

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