

Wednesday, April 22, 2009

Authors and illustrators abound in summer reading course

Editor's Note: The following story is part of a series featuring Oakland University courses offered in the 2009 Summer Semester. It is designed to highlight diverse opportunities for students to continue their education year round. For more information, visit www.oakland.edu/summer.

By Amanda Benjamin, student writer

Children's books come to life with the RDG 570: Authors' and Illustrators' Art and Craft course that presents ten award-winning authors and illustrators from June 29-July 23, taught by Jim Cipielewski and Linda Pavonetti.

"For many children, the closest they're going to get to an art museum is a picture book," Cipielewski said. The purpose of the class is to analyze and discuss the art and craft of children's and young adult literature in order for the students to gain an understanding of art and story in themselves as well as their students.

"The focus of the class is on the aesthetics, the creative process," Cipielewski said.

Cipielewski said that it is exciting to get the chance to know the authors and illustrators as real people. The guest speakers are Lynne Rae Perkins, Nikki Grimes, Molly Bang, Deborah Hopkinson, Janet Wong, William Low, Kathe Koja, Linda Vaccaro Seeger and Marc Arsonson.

The first guest speaker is Perkins, a John Newberry Medal winner, which is the highest award for children's literature in the United States for his work, "Criss Cross." Perkins has also authored several Boston Globe-Horn honor books.

Grimes is a Coretta Scott King (CSK) Author Award winner and has two CSK honor books. She also received the 2006 National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) Award for Excellence in Poetry for Children and the Golden Dolphin Award by the Southern California Children's Book Association.

Bang has received a Boston Globe-Horn Book Award, three Randolph Caldecott honor medals, which is the highest award for illustration in the country, and has been named to the International Board on Books for Young People's Honor List. According to Cipielewski, Bang's book "Ten, Nine, Eight" is "one of the best bedtime books I've ever seen in my life."

Hopkinson has won an Orbis Pictus Honor Award, Boston Globe-Horn Honor and Jane Addams Award, which is given to the book that most effectively promotes peace, social justice, world community and the equality of the sex and race.

Greene lives in West Bloomfield and has received the School Library Journal Best Book, IRA-CBC Children's Choice Book and Bank Street College Best Book. Also, her book "Barnyard Song" was chosen for the first Michigan Reads: One State, One Book award for early childhood literacy, a program that was co-chaired by Governor Jennifer Granholm.

Wong has received the Asian/Pacific American Award for Literature, Stone Center Recognition of Merit and the International Reading Association's "Celebrate Literacy Award." She was also one of five children's authors invited to read at the White House Easter Egg Roll in 2003.

Low has been a commercial illustrator and painter for 22 years and has illustrated a Jane Addams Honor Award book along with receiving four silver medals from the Society of Illustrators.

Koja is from the Detroit area and had one of her books on the International Reading Association Young Adult Fiction list. Her book, "Straydog," was honored by the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA) and Humane Society.

Vaccaro Seeger has won numerous awards including the Boston Globe-Horn Book Award, Randolph Caldecott Honor, New York Times Best Illustrated Book Award and Geisel Honor. Two of her award-winning books include "First the Egg" and "Dog and Bear: Two Friends – Three Stories."

Arsonson is an author, editor, publisher, speaker and historian. He has won the Robert Sibert Informational Book Award from American Library Association and Boston Globe-Horn Book Award.

According to Cipielewski, there are multiple ways of doing the creative process and students should not be limited, so this class lets them explore different ways of writing.

"It's unique," Cipielewski said. "There's not another class like this in the country."

The class meets Monday through Thursday from 8:30-11:50 a.m. and can be taken for two or four graduate or undergraduate credits, or SBCEUs. For more information, visit <http://rla.oakland.edu/~childlit/Home.html>.

Current students may register for this class online at <https://blitz.sys.oakland.edu>. Guest students interested in taking this course should follow the undergraduate or graduate link on [this page](#).

SUMMARY

The RDG 570: Authors' and Illustrators' Art and Craft course presents ten award-winning authors and illustrators and is taught by Jim Cipielewski and Linda Pavonetti.

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