



The Israel Museum, Jerusalem, The Ruth Youth Wing



The Israel Museum Ben-Yitzhak Award for the Illustration of a Children's Book, 2006

The Israel Museum Ben-Yitzhak

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About the Award

Book illustrations are the first works of art we encounter as children. The experience of looking at a fine quality illustration encompasses all the elements involved in viewing an outstanding artwork: pleasure, excitement, discovering the message, and identifying the period and the place. The Israel Museum's award for the illustration of children's books seeks to increase awareness of this art form and encourage outstanding illustrators.

In the 28 years of its existence, the award has been presented every other year to ten illustrators (a few have been selected more than once); 41 honorable mentions; and three special honorable mentions have also been conferred, singling out a total of 74 books to date.

In 2005, the Israel Museum published a comprehensive book surveying all the illustrators who had been given the award up to that year: *The Big Book of Illustrators*.

The Ben-Yizhak Award is given in memory of Rivi (Soifer) and Michael Ben-Yizhak, who were killed in a terrorist attack in Jerusalem's Zion Square in the summer of 1975, leaving two children.

Award Selection Procedure

The Israel Museum appoints four expert jurors, and they grant the award to the artist who has created the most outstanding illustrations. The jury may also award up to five honorable mentions to other illustrators. They also have the authority to decide not to give out the award or the honorable mentions to any illustrators, if there are no suitable candidates. The award is granted primarily on the basis of the artistic quality of the illustrator's work, while other aspects of the book are also taken into account: the quality of the text, the connection between the illustrations and the text, suitability to the age group of the intended reader, the design, layout, printing, binding, and the craftsmanship of book as a whole.

Only books first published in Israel between January 1, 2004, and December 31, 2005, were eligible for this year's award.

Entries included 173 books illustrated by 111 artists, which were published by 43 publishing houses.

The Jury

Nurit Shilo-Cohen, Chairperson, Senior Curator-at-Large for Museum Education and Curator of Illustration, The Israel Museum, Jerusalem

Michel Kichka, Illustrator, Chairman of ACI

Yigal Zalmona, Chief Curator-at-Large, The Israel Museum, Jerusalem

Prof. Rachel Elior, Head of the Department of Jewish Thought, the Hebrew University of Jerusalem

On January 22, 2005, the jury of the Israel Museum Ben-Yitzhak Award for the Illustration of a Children's Book convened and decided to award five honorable mentions (silver medals) to the following illustrators:

Gilad Soffer for the book *Oh, Brother*, published by Am Oved.

Rutu Modan for the book *Who Drank my Juice?*, published by Sifriat Poalim.

Natalie Pudalov for the book *Zevuva-Zamzumuva*, published by Keter.

Ofra Amit for the book *The Hens and the Fox*, published by Zivlin Books.

Gil-ly Alon Curiel for the book *Behind the Peaches Curtain*, published by HaKibbutz HaMeuhad.

The jury decided not to award a first prize (gold medal) this year.



Gilad Soffer



Rutu Modan



Natalie Pudalov



Ofra Amit



Gil-ly Alon Curiel



Gilad Soffer



Gil-ly Alon Curiel



Ofra Amit



Rutu Modan



Natalie Pudalov

Gilad Soffer

Oh, Brother

Author: Jonathan Yavin
Am Oved, 2005

The illustrations for *Oh, Brother* and the story itself are unusually refreshing. The book describes, in an original and novel way, the familiar situation of a new brother joining the family. The illustrations and the text make their own unique contribution to the book, while at the same time harmoniously complementing each other.

The language of the illustrations is characterized by simplicity of shape and inner depth. The compositions are surprising, the observation points unconventional, and the page makeup daring. The contour lines, drawn with a sensitive hand, are in pencil, and the soft colors of the illustrations are created with pastels. The book is very generously illustrated, imparting a great deal of information beyond the written text and enriching the reading process. At first glance the illustrations offer general information, but on closer inspection, the reader discovers details, many of them humorous, that are repeated throughout the book. For

example, the woman who goes out to take a walk with a chicken attached to a leash, the bird that loses a feather, as well as its eyebrows, or the photograph of the dog wearing a suit, hanging on the wall among the other family photos. The humorous illustrations add vitality to the book and captivate the reader, who can easily discern the delight and freedom which the illustrator brought to his work.

The text is sharp, to the point, and entertaining, and its quality of non-conformity gave the illustrator further freedom for interpretation. The two facets blended together to produce a book full of grace and charm.

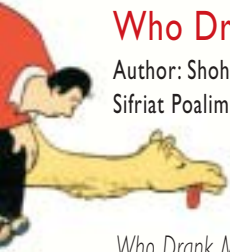




Rutu Modan

Who Drank My Juice?

Author: Shoham Smit
Sifriat Poalim, 2004



Who Drank My Juice? is a humorous “nonsense” book meant for all ages. It is built on two planes that engage in a complex dialogue. In the foreground is the story’s framework: a realistic discussion between a boy and his father, rendered in black and white. In back of it there is a make-believe story, a linear and colorful “text,” which the father recounts to his son. In the realistic story, the father answers the boy’s questions, while in the background a make-believe camel and its provides an absurd and amusing explanation for things that are happening in the house. The absurd and a-logical story is written in the language of stand-up comedy, mediated by the illustrations that place the narrative in a familiar environment – an average Israeli apartment of the 1960s. The parallels between the two stories exist both on the level of content and on the level of the illustrations, and in combination they interconnect with one another very successfully.

Rutu Modan is seen here at her best – with her familiar style, its precision and vibrant colors. Her graphic language, which grew out of comics, is well suited to the form of this book. The few frames and balloons are located in the colorful, behind-the-scenes story, the strips are divided up into all sorts of shapes on the folds of the pages, and the different compositions form an interesting interplay. An intentional and obvious gap exists between the realistic depiction of the imaginary camel and the almost grotesque representation of the real father, who is drawn in the black and red of Tintin, as a type of homage to Hergé.

The book is extremely well crafted, as seen in the choice of colors, the binding, the end paper, and the printing, and it is very obviously born out of a close and successful cooperation between the illustrator and the designer.



Natalie Pudalov

Zevuva-Zamzumuva (Zamzumuva the Fly)

Author: Kornej Chukovsky; translated from the Russian by Einat Yakir
Keter, 2004

Zevuva-Zamzumuva is Natalie Pudalov's first book; it was also her final project at the Bezalel Academy of Art and Design. An entire world of giant and miniature, highly detailed, and frenetic creatures populate the book creating a colorful fantasy of intense movement. These creatures provide a special vocabulary of forms that testify to the illustrator's rich and humorous personal

interpretation. The highly ornamented images move about colorful backgrounds spread out over the folds of the pages. The wood textures that serve as the base for the illustrations can be seen through the thick colored surfaces. The color is composed of hues of yellows and oranges, greens, and purples. Even though the atmosphere appears to be antiquated and old-fashioned, reminiscent of Russian folk art, many of the details are contemporary and taken from the Israeli scene, such as the inscription "Shuk HaCarmel."

Sometimes the relationship between the text and the illustrations allows the book to be read simply from the pictures, and at other times the words are seen as part of the visual composition.



שוק הכרמל



מהרה לשוק הכפר

וקנתה שם סמובר:

“בואו בואו פשפשים,

יש לי תה מחבובשים!”



Ofra Amit

The Hens and the Fox

Author: H.N. Bialik
Zivlin Books, 2005



Ofra Amit's illustrations are rich and their colorful personal language creates the atmosphere of a European fairy tale whose dominant colors are terra-cotta and green-blues. The illustrator's unique language is based on simple, repeated shapes presented in several different rhythmic patterns. For example, the hens have been given the shape of triangles formed by the feathers that cover their bodies like coats; the shape of the chicks is a smaller version of that same triangle. Among the distinctive visual characteristics of the book are the minimalizing of forms and the composition of blocks, as well as the tumult of the illustrations alongside the great sensitivity of the hand-painted work, expressed in the colorful surfaces and the contour lines, and the attention that went into illustrating shadow and shade.

The full illustrated pages, with wave, linear, or circular divisions, together with the decorative bands flanking the text, which contain five different

details, are highly original graphic solutions that recapitulate the vocabulary of the book. This allows for another reading and a closer examination of the illustrated "text." Balance combined with the variety and diversity of illustrations that have varying degrees of intensity is another characteristic feature of *The Hens and the Fox*.

Bialik's story, which gives a voice to the other – the handicapped and disabled in the character of the lame and wise hen – is reinforced and given new vitality with Amit's illustrations, making the text, which was written 70 years ago, accessible once again to contemporary readers.

The back of the book contains information about the illustrator and the author, as well as their photographs, a summary of the story, and the suggested age of the reader. This is a standard feature of the illustrated children's books published by Zivlin Books and it deserves to be praised.



Gil-ly Alon Curiel

Behind the Peaches Curtain

Author: Shlomit Cohen-Assif
Ha-Kibbutz Ha-Meuhad, 2004

The winning charm of Gil-ly Alon Curiel's illustrations kindles the desire to read this book of poems. Even though each of the poems stands on its own, the illustrator chose to complement them with the image of a boy who is portrayed in all sorts of situations inside and outside the house. In this way the artist created a unifying line that is threaded throughout the book. Every page in this small and modest volume looks like a self-contained postcard with a text, an illustration, and a page number. The composition of illustration and text

is as it should be, and the flow of white space is good. The illustrator used colored ink and water colors and her command of this technique is expressed in virtuoso and clever solutions masked in child-like simplicity, and in the interesting use of shadows and bluish shades that are seen in every page of *Behind the Peaches Curtain*.

Almost like a pocket book, this small book, with its modest format, is rare in the local book making scene; but, this only adds to its distinctiveness and enchantment.



