

RELEASE: SEPTEMBER 12, 2016
9:30 a.m. EDT

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2016 National Book Awards Longlist For Young People's Literature Announced

The ten contenders for the National Book Award for Young People's Literature.

New York, NY (September 12, 2016) – The National Book Foundation today announced the Longlist for the 2016 National Book Award for Young People's Literature. Finalists will be revealed on October 13.

Established and emerging authors on the Longlist include Eisner Award Winner, United States Congressman, and civil rights leader, John Lewis; past National Book Award Finalist and two-time Newbery Medal recipient, Kate DiCamillo; ALA Coretta Scott King Book Award recipients, Kwame Alexander and Jason Reynolds; Newbery Honor Winner, Grace Lin; Pura Belpré Award winner, Meg Medina; and *New York Times* bestselling debut author, Nicola Yoon.

The ten titles on the Longlist represent a range of diverse voices and writing styles that address issues such as loneliness, first love, violence in the home, sexual identity, immigration, interracial dating, social activism, and the effects of war on children. Sports proved to be a recurring theme with baseball, basketball, baton twirling, and soccer appearing in four titles.

The Young People's Literature category encompasses young-adult and middle grade books: **Kwame Alexander's** *Booked*, which is written in verse, is about an African-America boy on the cusp of becoming a teenager; the prevalent themes in **Kate DiCamillo's** *Raymie Nightingale* are perseverance and friendship; **Congressman John Lewis, Andrew Aydin, and Nate Powell's (artist)** *March: Book Three* is the final installment of a graphic memoir trilogy that chronicles the Civil Rights Movement.

Grace Lin's *When the Sea Turned to Silver* was inspired by Chinese folklore; **Anna-Marie McLemore**'s *When the Moon Was Ours* infuses multiculturalism and magical realism; **Meg Medina**'s *Burn Baby Burn* is historical fiction that takes place in New York City during the Son of Sam's reign of terror; **Sara Pennypacker**'s *Pax* is a fantastical story about a boy's quest to reunite with his pet fox in time of war; **Jason Reynolds**' *Ghost* highlights the healing power of being part of team; **Caren Stelson**'s *Sachiko* is the true story of a young girl who survived the atomic bomb in Nagasaki; and **Nicola Yoon**'s *The Sun is Also a Star* is a love story set on the day of a family's pending deportation.

Publishers submitted a total of 326 books for the 2016 National Book Award in Young People's Literature. The judges for Young People's Literature are William Alexander, Valerie Lewis, Ellen Oh, Katherine Paterson (Chair), and Laura Ruby. These distinguished judges were given the charge of selecting what they deem to be the best books of the year. Their decisions are made independently of the National Book Foundation staff and Board of Directors; deliberations are strictly confidential. To be eligible for a 2016 National Book Award, a book must have been written by a US citizen and published in the United States between December 1, 2015 and November 30, 2016.

The remaining Longlists for the Poetry, Nonfiction, and Fiction categories will be revealed exclusively at newyorker.com at 9 a.m. EDT as follows: Poetry on Tuesday, September 13; Nonfiction on September 14; and finally, the Longlist for Fiction on September 15.

The National Book Award Finalists will be announced on October 13 and the Winners at the invitation-only National Book Awards Ceremony and Benefit Dinner on November 16 in New York City.

2016 Longlist for the National Book Award for Young People's Literature:

Kwame Alexander, *Booked* (Houghton Mifflin Harcourt)

Kate DiCamillo, *Raymie Nightingale* (Candlewick Press)

John Lewis, Andrew Aydin & Nate Powell (Artist) *March: Book Three* (Top Shelf)

Grace Lin, *When the Sea Turned to Silver* (Little, Brown Books for Young Readers)

Anna-Marie McLemore, *When the Moon Was Ours* (Thomas Dunne Books / St. Martin's Press)

Meg Medina, *Burn Baby Burn* (Candlewick Press)

Sara Pennypacker & Jon Klassen (Illustrator), *Pax* (Balzer & Bray / HarperCollins)

Jason Reynolds, *Ghost* (Atheneum Books for Young Readers / Simon & Schuster Children's Publishing)

Caren Stelson, *Sachiko: A Nagasaki Bomb Survivor's Story* (Carolrhoda Books / Lerner Publishing Group)

Nicola Yoon, *The Sun Is Also A Star* (Delacorte Press / Penguin Random House)

BIOGRAPHIES:

Kwame Alexander is a poet, educator, and *New York Times* Bestselling author of 21 books, including *The Crossover*, which received the 2015 John Newbery Medal for the Most Distinguished Contribution to American Literature for Children, the Coretta Scott King Author Award Honor, the NCTE Charlotte Huck Honor, the Lee Bennett Hopkins Poetry Award, and the Paterson Poetry Prize. His other works include *Surf's Up*, a picture book, *Crush: Love Poems for Teenagers*, and *He Said She Said*, a young adult novel.

Andrew Aydin co-authored the third volume of the graphic memoir *March* Trilogy with John Lewis, Georgia's Fifth Congressional District Representative. Nate Powell drew the illustrations. Aydin serves as Digital Director & Policy Advisor to Congressman Lewis in Washington, D.C.

Kate DiCamillo's *Lora and Ulysses: The Illuminated Adventures* was on the National Book Award Longlist for Young People's Literature in 2013, and she was a National Book Award Finalist for the same category in 2001 for *The Tiger Rising*. She won a Newbery Medal in 2004

for *The Tale of Despereaux: Being the Story of a Mouse, a Princess, Some Soup, and a Spool of Thread*. DiCamillo served as the Library of Congress National Ambassador for Young People's Literature for 2014 and 2015.

John Lewis co-authored the third volume of the graphic memoir March Trilogy with Andrew Aydin, drawn by Nate Powell. Lewis is Georgia's Fifth Congressional District Representative and an American icon widely known for his role in the Civil Rights Movement. He is the author of *Walking with the Wind: A Memoir of the Movement*, published in 1999, which won numerous awards; and *Across That Bridge: Life Lessons and a Vision for Change*, published in 2012.

Grace Lin is the author and illustrator of picture books, including the *Ugly Vegetables* and *Dim Sum for Everyone!* Her first children's novel, *The Year of the Dog* was published in 2006. Lin won a Newbery Honor Book award for *Where the Mountain Meets the Moon*, which was also a Today Show Kids Book Club Selection.

Anna-Marie McLemore's debut novel *The Weight of Feathers* was a Junior Library Guild Selection, a YALSA Best Fiction for Young Adults book, and a finalist for the William C. Morris Debut Award. *When the Moon Was Ours* is her second novel.

Meg Medina is the 2016 recipient of the Pura Belpré honor medal for her picture book, *Mango, Abuela and Me*, and the 2014 Pura Belpré Award winner for her young adult novel, *Yaqui Delgado Wants to Kick Your Ass*, which was also the winner of the 2013 CYBILS Fiction award and the International Latino Book Award. She is also the 2012 Ezra Jack Keats New Writers medal winner for her picture book *Tía Isa Wants a Car*.

Sara Pennypacker is the author of seventeen children's books, including the *New York Times* best-selling *Clementine* series; *Summer of the Gypsy Moths*; *Pierre in Love*; *Sparrow Girl*; and *The Amazing World of Stuart*. She has also contributed four books to the Flat Stanley series.

Jason Reynolds is the author of *All American Boys*, which he wrote with Brendan Kiely, and the *Boy in the Black Suit*, both of which are Coretta Scott King Honor books. He won the 2015

Coretta Scott King/John Steptoe Award for New Talent for *When I Was the Greatest*. He's working on the next three books in the Track series.

Caren B. Stelson has written several books. She has an MFA in Writing for Children and Young Adults from Hamline University.

Nicola Yoon's first novel, *Everything, Everything*, debuted at #1 on the *New York Times* Bestseller list. *The Sun is Also a Star* is her second novel.

2016 National Book Award Judges for Young People's Literature:

William Alexander won the National Book Award in 2012 for his first novel, *Goblin Secrets*. His second novel, *Ghoulish Song*, was a finalist for the Mythopoeic Award. His third, *Ambassador*, was a finalist for the International Latino Book Award and won the Eleanor Cameron Award. Will studied theater and folklore at Oberlin College, English at the University of Vermont, and creative writing at Clarion. He teaches at the Vermont College of Fine Arts.

Valerie Lewis has been a consultant, writer, reviewer and promoter of young people's books for over 30 years. She appeared regularly on CBS TV's *The Early Show* (17 years), talked books on PBS and NPR and has written reviews for magazines, books and periodicals. She is co-author of *Valerie & Walter's Best Books for Children: A Lively and Opinionated Guide*. As founder and co-owner of Hicklebee's Bookstore (1979-present), she works daily as an advocate for young people's literacy.

Ellen Oh is co-founder, President, and CEO of We Need Diverse Books (WNDB), a non-profit organization dedicated to increasing diversity in children's literature. She is also a former adjunct college instructor and corporate/entertainment attorney. She is the author of the YA fantasy trilogy, *The Prophecy Series*, published by *HarperTeen*.

Katherine Paterson (*Chair*) is the author of more than 30 books, including 16 novels for children and young people. She has twice won the Newbery Medal, for *Bridge to Terabithia* in 1978 and *Jacob Have I Loved* in 1981. *The Master Puppeteer* won the National Book Award in

1977 and *The Great Gilly Hopkins* won the National Book Award in 1979 and was a Newbery Honor Book. For her body of work she received the Hans Christian Andersen Award in 1998, had Astrid Lindgren Memorial Award in 2006, and in 2000 was named a Living Legend by the Library of Congress.

Laura Ruby is the author of seven books for children and teens including *Bone Gap*, a National Book Award Finalist, winner of the Michael L. Printz Award, and a *Publisher's Weekly* Best Book of 2015. She also writes short fiction for adults. She is on the faculty of Hamline University's MFA in Writing for Children and Young Adults program.

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The National Book Foundation's mission is to celebrate the best of American literature, to expand its audience, and to enhance the cultural value of good writing in America. In addition to the National Book Awards, for which it is best known, the Foundation's programs include 5 Under 35, a celebration of emerging fiction writers selected by former National Book Award Finalists and Winners; the National Book Awards Teen Press Conference, an opportunity for New York City students to interview the current National Book Award Finalists in Young People's Literature; NBA on Campus, a partnership that brings National Book Award authors to colleges across the country; the Innovations in Reading Prize, awarded to individuals and institutions that have developed innovative means of creating and sustaining a lifelong love of reading; and BookUp, a writer-led, after-school reading program for middle-school students.

The National Book Award is one of the nation's most prestigious literary prizes and has a stellar record of identifying and rewarding quality writing. In 1950, William Carlos Williams was the first Winner in Poetry, the following year William Faulkner was honored in Fiction, and so on through the years. Many previous Winners of a National Book Award are now firmly established in the canon of American literature, such as Sherman Alexie, Louise Erdrich, Jonathan Franzen, Denis Johnson, James McBride, Joyce Carol Oates, Adrienne Rich, and Jesmyn Ward.