

## Illustrator News - February 2023

### Discoveries

Quite often for me, characters pop in out of the blue. They appear in a sketch book or on my iPad when I'm doodling. Most of them are saved in a 'miscellaneous' file. But some of them tug at my imagination until I pay attention; it's as if they are already characters in an unknown story they want me to discover.

After consciously creating expressive, relational characters to fit *specific* stories, it's a treat to have these unexpected characters arrive effortlessly. Through simple, raw line-work, dynamic gestures, odd proportions, quirky expressions and physical attitudes, each one brings a story that I can choose to follow - or not.

Working as an artist in schools for decades, I learned how malleable and funny story-worlds can be, and how impactful they are in helping to stimulate original thinking, problem-solving, collaboration, empathy, and expressiveness. I learned this from children - many, many times.

Our stories always began with characters - like Mina's crow, below. Through surface design, she created a story (within our greater group story) that was meaningful to her. If you and I were to translate her design, each of us would tell a different story. And that's the point. We are unique, and the child in you is a unique, wonder-full storyteller.

As you continue to work on commissions, explore new media, and refine your illustration style(s), I encourage you to follow your curiosity when those quirky invitations from your imagination pop up. Who knows where you'll go?

2nd Grade Illustrator & Storyteller, 2006



### Tips from the archive:

**2020 SCBWI National Conference Speaker:**

Always ask: "Who am I writing this story for?"

*"Picture books capture those tiny moments that fill our hearts. Dive into your inner child, search for those 'sparkle moments'."*



Robin Chilstrom  
Oregon Illustrator

## February 2023 Featured Oregon Illustrators



Alexis Eastburn



Lezlee Ware



Artwork: Chamisa Kellogg

### [Oregon SCBWI Featured Illustrators](#)

Visit the [feature page](#) to learn about Aubrey and Lezlee, view samples of their artwork, and link to their websites and portfolios! (*click below*)

[Featured Illustrators](#)



### Would you like to be featured?

To be considered, you must have an SCBWI Illustrator profile. About those profiles: we want your work to be seen - available to editors, agents and other folks, so we've made it easier to find your profile through the [Oregon Illustrator Gallery](#).

If you haven't set up a profile, [HERE'S HOW!](#)

To find out more or apply, contact Robin: [Oregon-ic@SCBWI.org](mailto:Oregon-ic@SCBWI.org)

## SCBWI Opportunities - February 2023

### Awards and Grants

Click the button below to visit the Awards and Grants application Page. Here's what's coming up in the near future:

[Awards & Grants](#)

February	March
<p><b>Book Launch Award</b> Opens February 1 Closes February 28 Announced April 15</p>	<p><b>Work in Progress Award</b> Opens March 1 Closes March 31 Announced September 15</p>
<p><b>Crystal Kite Awards</b> Details coming soon. Announced May 15</p>	<p><b>Don Freeman Grant</b> Opens March 1 Closes March 31 Announced September 15</p>
	<p><b>Karen Cushman Late Bloomer Award</b> Opens March 1 Closes March 31 Announced October 15</p>



## SCBWI Virtual Event Listings

Oregon SCBWI Events; we'll keep you updated over the coming months. In the meantime:

- **National Illustrator Virtual Events** are posted and updated bi-weekly on [Oregon's Illustrators Page](#). If you've not had a chance to check out what other regions are offering, take a look.
- **March/April highlights for Illustrators** below.

### Picture Book Crossover

Visual Thinking for Picture Book Writers  
with Literary Agent  
**MARIA VICENTE**  
March 6th, 2023

PB Crossover



### How to Plot a Graphic Novel

With Graphic Novel writer and  
illustrator **MIKA SONG**  
March 11, 2023

GN Plotting



**Mika Song-Illustrator Intensive on Graphic Novels**  
March 11, 9am -12 noon P.T.

Mika Song writes and illustrates children's books about sweetly funny outsiders. She grew up in the Philippines and Hawaii and lives in Queens, New York. Her squirrel characters, Norma and Belly, appear every week in a comic strip on [Sundayhaha.com](#), a free kids comics newsletter that she started with Jen de Oliveira in March 2020. She loves making comics with kids in schools and drawing on paper.

**The Picture Book Process** with  
**SAHO FUGI**, Art Director of Picture Books,  
Littel, Brown Books for Young Readers  
March 11, 2023

PB Process



### Picture Book Crossover

Finding your story as an Illustrator with  
Literary Agent **CHAD BECKERMAN**  
March 16th, 2023

PB Crossover



### Western Washington Great Critique 2023

April 29, 2023

Great Critique

SCBWI Western Washington

**GET FEEDBACK FROM  
PUBLISHED PROFESSIONALS!**

**THE 2023  
GREAT CRITIQUE**

GUEST SPEAKER: **MARY BOONE**

Saturday, April 29, 1-4 pm PST • On Zoom

**Publishing Path:** How to get your work

noticed. **JANET MORISHIMA**  
New Leaf Literary  
Agent & Marketing Expert  
April 20, 2023



[Publishing Path](#)

### Illustrator as Designer:

**JOHN HENDRIX**, Book Jackets, Visual  
Storytelling and Hand-Drawn Lettering

May 22, 2023

[John Hendrix](#)



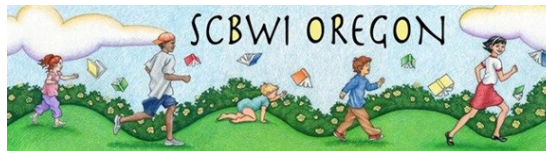
Here are [Quick Links to essential SCBWI Resources](#), just for you!

[Quick Link Page](#)

### KidLit Illustrators Talk Podcast

Oregon Illustrators are featured in this podcast: available on many of your favorite podcast providers. New podcasts posted bi-monthly. Listen [HERE](#).

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