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Children's Literature: What's on the Horizon

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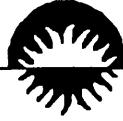


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Cohen, Barbara. 1997. *Thank You, Jackie Robinson*. Illustrated by Richard Cuffari, NY: Beech Tree, \$4.95 pb. ISBN: p-688-15293-7. 128 pp.

This is the very moving and heartwarming story of a relationship which grows between Sam, a 10-year-old Jewish boy and Davy, a 60-year-old African American man. The two become friends when Davy listens intently as Sam recounts the entire play by play of one of the Brooklyn Dodgers baseball games. The time is 1945. Sam's father has died and Sam's mother runs an Inn in New Jersey where Davy has been hired as the cook. Both Sam and Davy love baseball and particularly the Dodgers whose owner has signed Jackie Robinson to play his first season in the Majors. Barbara Cohen deals sensitively with the issues of friendship and death while subtly handling the issues of race and discrimination. Her baseball history is given in enough detail to be enlightening, but never boring.

There are several black and white drawings spread throughout the book which offer a realistic visual representation of the characters and actions.

Flor Ada, Alma. 1997. *Gathering the Sun: An Alphabet in Spanish and English*. Translated by Rosa Zubizarreta. Illustrated by Simon Silva. NY: Lothrop, Lee and Shepard Books. \$16.00. ISBN: 0-688-13903-5. 40 pp.

This is a book in which the beauty of the illustrations match the beauty of the text to create vivid and powerful images of the lives of migrant farm workers and their strong Mexican heritage. The alphabet is presented in Spanish with the English translation not necessarily following in alphabetical order. For example the letter A is represented by Arboles which in English is Trees. The language is deceptively simple and the gouache paintings are striking. This is a book which will both enchant and enlighten.

Hughes, Shirley. 1997. *Enchantment in the Garden*. NY: Lothrop, Lee & Shepard Books. \$18.00. ISBN: 0-688-14597-3. 64 pp.

As both author and illustrator, Shirley Hughes tells a magical story in which a lonely young girl whose whisper in the ear of a stone statue of a boy riding a dolphin brings the boy to life. The water color paintings and text work well together to draw the reader into Valerie and Cherubino's play world until Cherubino realizes he must leave and return to the sea to join his father and be a god of the sea.

Mitchell, Barbara. 1997. *Waterman's Child*. Illustrated by Daniel San Souci. NY: Lothrop, Lee & Shepard Books. \$16.00. ISBN: 0-688-10861-X. 40 pp.

Barbara Mitchell's clearly and simply written text and Daniel San Souci's detailed and realistic watercolor illustrations follow the history of the watermen on the Chesapeake Bay who gather oysters as big as a man's fist. The

story follows one family through several generations in which the boys want to become watermen and the girls want to be watermen's wives like those who have come before them.

Pomerantz, Charlotte. 1997. *Mangaboom*. Illustrated by Anita Lobel. NY: Greenwillow Books. \$16.00. ISBN: 0-688-12956-0. 40 pp.

This is the delightful story of Daniel who while walking in the woods finds a huge pink slipper with a yellow bow and upon stepping inside finds himself lifted into the biggest mango tree he has ever seen. He meets Mangaboom a giant who speaks both English and Spanish. She has hoisted the shoe up to where she lives to find not only Daniel but a letter — the first love letter she has ever received. She invites Daniel to come with her to her Aunt's for tea and the story of the love letter unravels from there. Anita Lobel's watercolor and gouache paintings show the giant Mangaboom to be a playful and loving creature who values Daniel's friendship, but who is not at all interested in her Aunt's matchmaking. This is both a humorous and an enchanting story of friendship.

Porte, Barbara Ann. 1997. *Surprise! Surprise! It's Grandfather's Birthday*. Illustrated by Bo Jia. NY: Greenwillow Books. \$15.00. ISBN: 0-688-14157-9. 32 pp.

This is the humorous and unusual story of seven grandchildren who come together to celebrate their grandfather's birthday. Several of the children are siblings and the others are cousins, but each one is described in a way which offers the reader the child's uniqueness. And while the pet dog and cat can go anywhere in the house, Anna's chicken "...belongs in the living room." The text and the watercolor illustrations work well