



Journeys through Bookland:  
Contemporary Illustrators of Children's Literature

THE ART GALLERY AT KINGSBOROUGH COMMUNITY COLLEGE

This catalogue coincides with the exhibition *Journeys through Bookland: Contemporary Illustrators of Children's Literature*, which has been organized by The Art Gallery at Kingsborough Community College, CUNY. The exhibition was on view from November 19 — December 17, 2014.

The Art Gallery at Kingsborough Community College, City University of New York  
Brian Edward Hack, Gallery Director  
Valerie Sokolova, Guest Curator  
John Descarfino, Department Chair

Catalogue Design: Brian Edward Hack

Front cover: Ivan Kravets, *Peter Pan*, 2013 (detail).

Back cover: Leonid Gore, *Danny's First Snow*, 2007 (detail).

The curator would like to thank Ivan Malkovych, the director of the *A-BA-BA-HA-LA-MA-HA* Publishing house, and illustrators Kateryna Shtanko, Kost' Lavro, Oleh Petrenko-Zanevsky, Victor Garkusha and Vladyslav Yerko for their permission to showcase some of their best published illustrations in our exhibition. Thanks also to Melissa Awai, Margaret Cusack, Nancy Doniger, Valeri Gorbachev, Leonid Gore, Daria Fisher, Ivan Kravetc, Olga Prokopenko-Del Pio, Atena Shams, Madeline Sorel, Stefano Vitale, Beata Szpura, Stefan Turk and Vita Usova for submitting their illustrations to share with our students. Last but not least, thanks to Brian Hack for his invaluable help with organizing this exhibition and designing the catalog.

# *Journeys through Bookland:*

*Contemporary Illustrators of Children's Literature*

Valerie Sokolova, Guest Curator

ART GALLERY  
KINGSBOROUGH  
COMMUNITY  
COLLEGE

## Curator's Statement

The world of children's books is an eternal illusion of a perfect world, appealing to both children and adults (since it is mainly parents, after all, who decide which book to purchase, sometimes following their own taste, sometimes the wishes of their children).

In our society, it is very difficult to meet a person who didn't grow up with at least one children's book. These books offer us the very first information on life in society, teach us attitudes, suggest real or imaginary role models, and provide an idea of how the world works. We also learn to perceive colors, shapes, sounds, and typography with the help of these books—which now exist in so many formats, from printed pages, to fabric toys, to interactive iPad adventures.

The purpose of this exhibition is to showcase examples of professional children's book illustration from around the world. As you observe the works up close, notice that the illustrations are often more than they seem. The drawings are rarely just a *literal* depiction of reality; instead, there is always a lens that the illustrator adds. The ability to add the right lens—and to expand on a story through their visual interpretation—often requires the artist to possess the qualities of a teacher, psychologist, writer, historian, designer, magician and most importantly, dreamer.

Over the past few decades, children's illustration has undergone significant changes. It sprouted centuries ago as a competitive, *elite profession*, and gradually transformed into something some might think of more as an *exclusive hobby* in which we still see an incredibly high level of competition, but no guarantee of a comfortable existence. In order to stay competitive, it is now almost a requirement for children's illustrators to be employed in related fields such as graphic design, animation, typography or education.

Although some may profess that all media is moving into the digital realm, over the last decade it has been my pleasure to notice publishers' renewed interest in illustrators who are able to work in traditional (non-digital) media. Such masters are scarce now, making them increasingly in demand.

So my advice to students is this: if you are seriously interested in this field, master not only digital but also traditional illustration skills, and learn to write well. Publishers are always looking for something new and unique; plus, they are happy to collaborate with artists who can also write their own books. With grit and determination, you WILL succeed. Take a look around this exhibition for inspiration. Good luck!

Valerie Sokolova  
Guest Curator

# Margaret CUSACK

USA

I studied graphic design, typography, print-making, drawing, animation, sculpture and painting at Pratt Institute, but later chose fabric and thread as my medium for creating artworks and illustrations. I applied my previous training to this unconventional medium: samplers, stitched artworks, illustrations, hangings, and soft sculptures.



*“Why fabric?” is a question that is always asked. The answer is: To me, fabric is instantaneous color, pattern and texture. It also evokes emotion, memory and nostalgia. I use fabric to transmit these qualities to the viewer. I enjoy creating realism using the interplay of patterns and textures.*

Since 1972, my stitched images have been used primarily for illustrations and large hangings, but I have also created stitched props, costumes, quilts and portraits that have been used in children’s books, posters, advertisements, magazines, etc. My book, *Picture Your World in Appliqué*, published by Watson-Guptill Publications, includes many of my artworks.

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MARGARET CUSACK



## Nancy DONIGER

USA

When I was a little girl, I loved to draw. I drew so much, that finally my parents put chalkboard all around the walls of my room. Then, I could draw as high as I could reach! I studied psychology and art at Rutgers College, New Brunswick, NJ, where I received my BA. After graduating, I studied painting

and drawing at the New York Studio School in NYC, and later painting, drawing and illustration at Parsons and SVA. I began my illustration career working mainly in black and white cut paper. I liked the way one can convey light and shadow and emotions with simple, bold imagery in that medium. I created many pieces for the *New York Times*, as well as other publications.

When I began working in color, I returned to cut paper. For *Morning Noon and Night: Poems to Fill Your Day*, I developed the texture of the collage further by using painted papers. Since then I have created illustrations in a variety of media, depending which best fit the project: paper collage, digital 'cut outs' or, as in my latest children's book *Lemonade, and Other Poems Squeezed from a Single Word*, brush and ink with watercolor.

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NANCY DONIGER



## Daria FISHER

USA

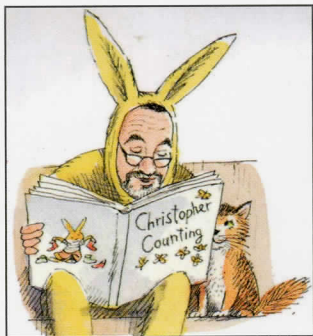
**D**aria Fisher was born in Moscow, Russia, in 1980 and immigrated to the United States with her family in 1991. She holds a BFA in Illustration from the Fashion Institute of Technology and presently participates in various disciplines of visual art, including graphic design and iconography. Fisher is influenced by the Russian artists of the nineteenth century, masters of the Italian Renaissance, and Art Nouveau. Among her many credits are *Lucia: Saint of Light* (Ancient Faith Publishers, 2009), *The Miracle of the Red Egg* (Ancient Faith Publishers, 2014), and *Silent as a Stone: Mother Maria of Paris and the Trash Can Rescue* (St. Vladimir's Press, 2007). She currently lives in Westchester, NY with her husband and two sons.



[www.coroflot.com/daria\\_fisher/illustration](http://www.coroflot.com/daria_fisher/illustration)



DARIA FISHER



## Valeri GORBACHEV

USA

Valeri Gorbachev emigrated from the Ukraine in 1991 with his wife and two children. While living in the former Soviet Union, he illustrated over forty books for children, many of which he also wrote. Since his arrival in the United States, Mr.

Gorbachev has continued to produce well-loved children's books, including *Nicky and the Big, Bad Wolves*, as well as other adventures with Pig and Goat such as *Where Is the Apple Pie?* and *One Rainy Day*, two favorites published by Philomel Books. Gorbachev lives with his family in Brooklyn, New York.

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VALERI GORBACHEV



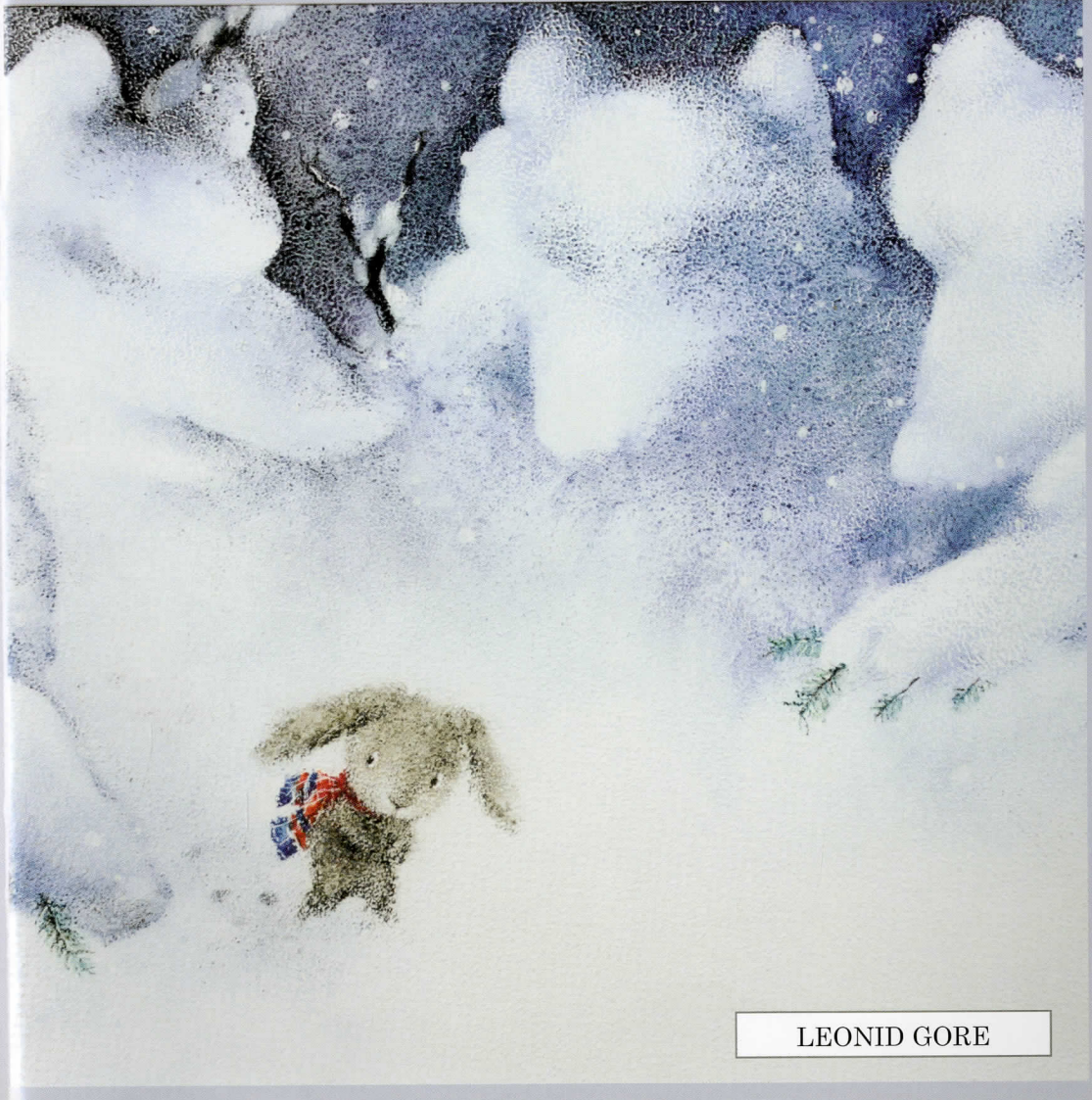
## Leonid GORE

USA

Leonid Gore was born and raised in Belarus. He studied art at the Academy of Arts in Minsk. Since 1990 he has lived in the United States, where his enormous talent has been recognized throughout the publishing world.

Critics have praised his work as "visually stunning," "brilliant," and "haunting." He has illustrated more than thirty children's books, five of which he also wrote. He has been widely praised for his artwork in such books as *Lucy Dove* (an IRA Children's Choice book, a *Publishers Weekly* Best Book of the Year), *Sleeping Boy* (A *Publishers Weekly* Best Book of the Year). He also excels at illustrations for book covers, including those for *The Christmas Rat* by Avi, and *Blizzard!* by Jim Murphy. His paintings have regularly been shown at the prestigious and competitive annual exhibitions of the Society of Illustrators in New York. Leonid Gore lives in Oakland, New Jersey.

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LEONID GORE



## **Melissa IWAI**

USA

**M**elissa Iwai has illustrated numerous award-winning books for children, including *Good Night Engines*, *B is for Bulldozer*, *Hush Little Monster*, and *Soup Day*,

which she also wrote. She lives in Brooklyn with her husband, author Denis Markell, and their son, Jamie.

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MELISSA IWAI

# Ivan KRAVETS

UKRAINE



Graphic artist, illustrator, and designer Ivan Kravets graduated from the Lviv' College of Applied and Decorative Arts and the Ukrainian Printing Academy in Lviv. He has participated in and has received recognition in dozens of international exhibitions of graphics and Ex Libris. A member of the Ukrainian Artists Union since 1997, Kravets actively works with Ukrainian, Russian, and Moldovan publishing houses. He has designed and illustrated more than forty books, including encyclopedias, fairy-tales, adventure literature, and poetry. Simultaneously he is engaged in design and branding, outdoor advertising, interiors, gaming, advertising, souvenir and print production, scenography and design exhibitions, web design, TV and animations. Kravets has illustrated over forty books, including *Peter Pan* (2013) and *Thumbelina* (2010). Since 1999 he has lived and worked in Kiev.

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IVAN KRAVETS

# Olga PROKOPENKO-DEL PIO

ITALY/UKRAINE/NIGERIA



I was born in Kiev in a family of scientists. I have been drawing as long as I can remember. All my childhood I attended art studios and evening schools. I finished Taras Shevchenko Republic Secondary Art School and then National Academy of Arts and Architecture with diplomas in book design and illustration.

I am travelling a lot with my family. As I dislike any kind of exotic, the only way to accept a new country is to put it under a magnifying glass and find something I deeply like. That's what happened when I saw old carousels of Buenos Aires. I was fascinated by this piece of culture very common for every *portenio* and not so famous in the world. One day I thought it would have been nice to write a story about carousels to leave a special memory to my little *portenia* about the city in which she was born.

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OLGA PROKOPENKO-DEL PIO





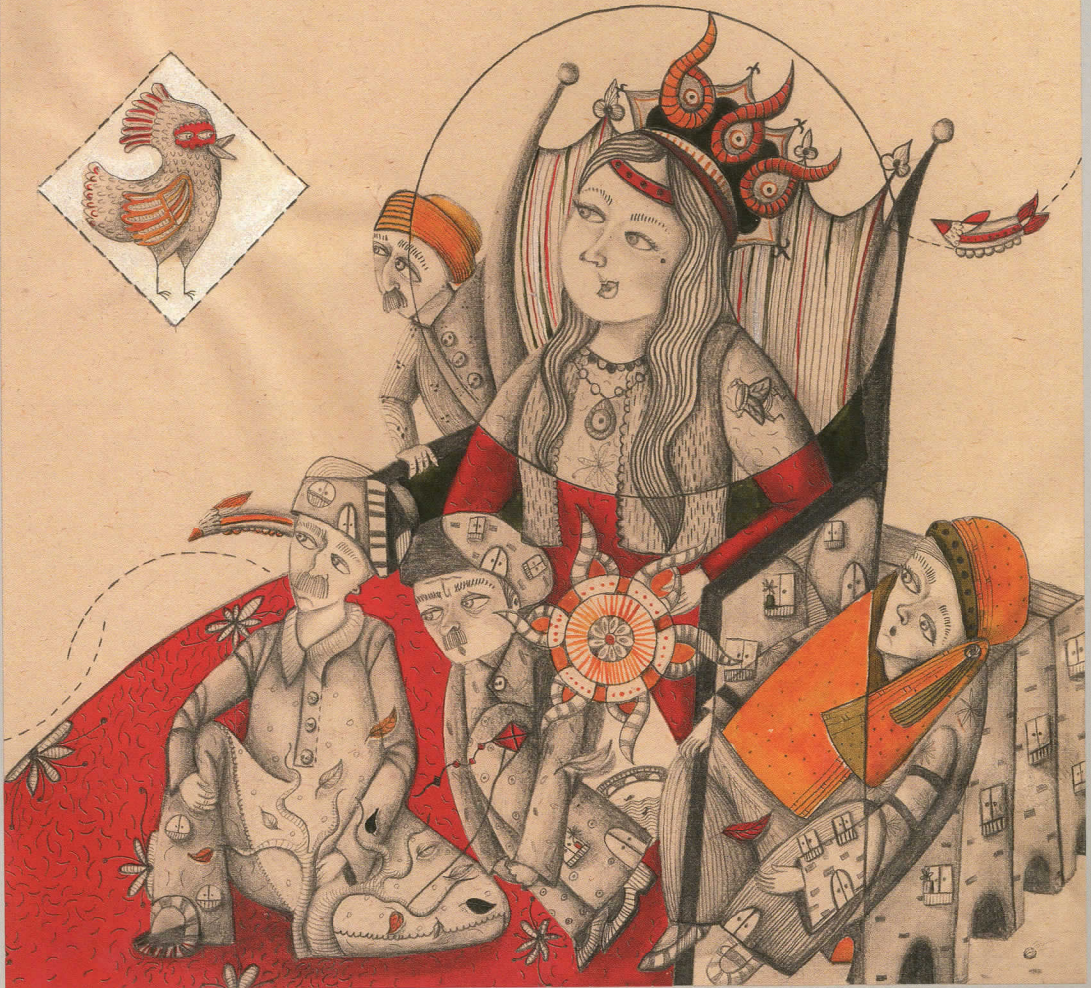
**Atena Shams ESFAND ABADI**  
IRAN

**A**tena Shams Esfand Abadi was born in 1988 in Tehran, Iran. She earned her MA in Illustration from the College of Art and Architecture, Azad University.

Atena works as an illustrator of young adult and children's books and magazines; she is member of an illustrators association. Among her credits are the poster for the *First Gothenburg Indie Film Festival*; the *Go Classified* exhibition of colors and methods at Kamal-al-Din Art Gallery; and a solo exhibition at Noor Art Gallery. She has also illustrated the classic *Tales from the Thousand and One Nights*.

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ATENA SHAMS ESFAND ABADI





## Valerie SOKOLOVA

USA

Valerie Sokolova was born in Lvov, Ukraine. She holds *Equiv. of BA in Illustration* (Ukrainian Polygraphists Institute) and *Equiv. of MFA in Applied and Decorative Arts* (Belorussian State Institute of

Theatre and Art). She has published numerous books in the United States and abroad. Valerie's books *Royal Birthday Adventure* by *ISeeMe* won two gold medals as the best book of 2012 (*Winner Creative child Award* and *Mom's Choice Gold Award*) in the US. The Ukrainian Magazine *Angeliatko (Little Angel)* awarded Valerie with the 2013 *Best Children's Artist of the Year Golden Feather Award*. Sokolova's latest written and illustrated children's book is *Forest Musicians* for StarLev (Old Lion) Publishing. She teaches design, typography and illustration at Kingsborough Community College. Sokolova lives in Brooklyn with her husband Alex, daughter Nikkie and a friendly wild gecko in the basement.

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VALERIE SOKOLOVA



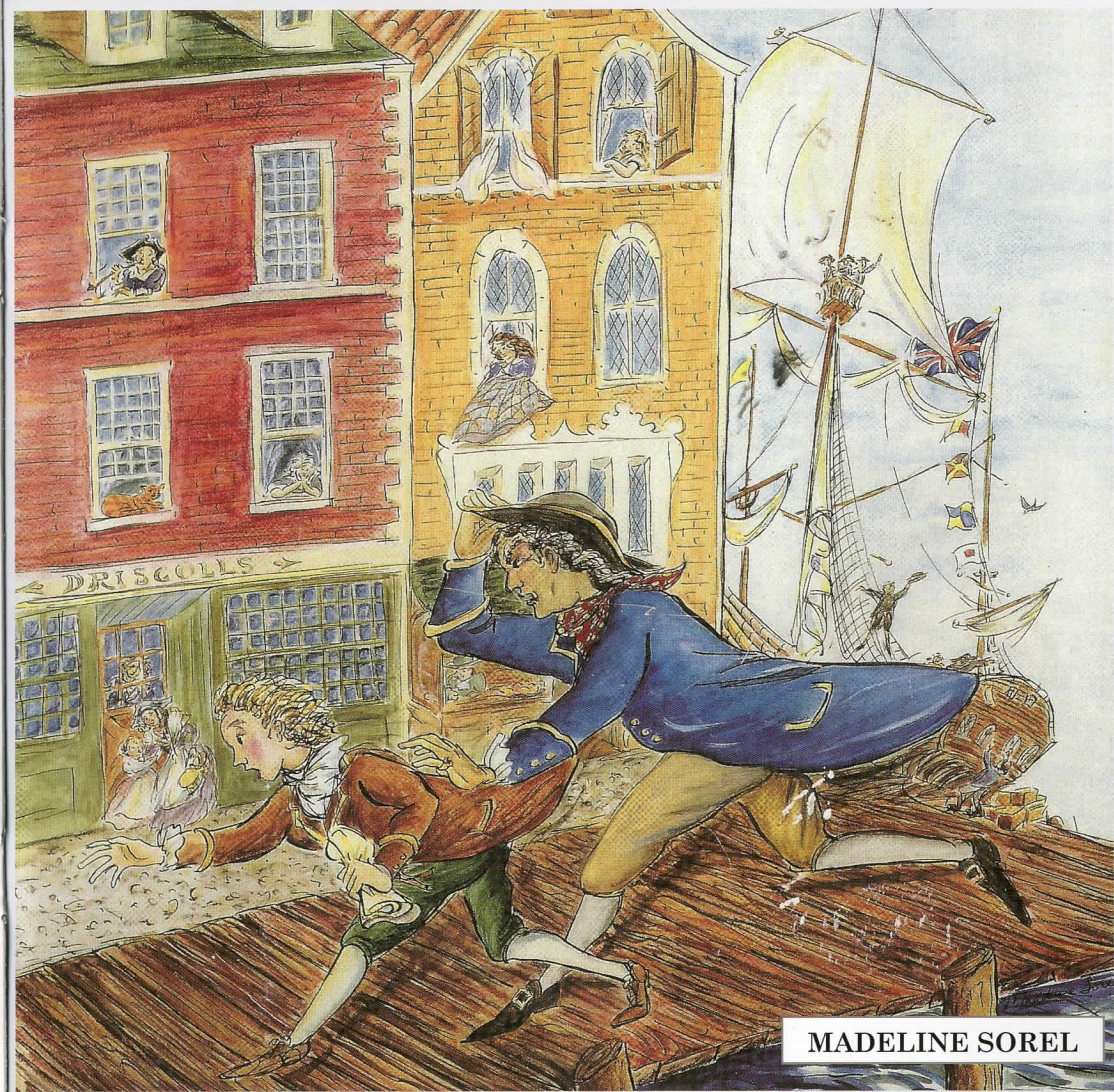
## Madeline SOREL

USA

I grew up drawing since my father, Edward Sorel, is an illustrator/cartoonist and I could work/play in his studio with all the art supplies. One of the greatest benefits of being an illustrator is that you continue to learn as your assignments get you to read material you wouldn't have chosen for

yourself. Illustrating *The Printer's Apprentice* allowed me to understand the story of freedom of the press, an important piece of American history that had been left out of my formal education. Historical novels bring history to life for children and adults and I have been fortunate to have illustrated a few of these in my career.

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MADELINE SOREL

## Beata SZPURA

USA

I am an illustrator, a painter and an educator and have worked for *The New York Times*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *The Washington Post*, *The Daily News*, *Business Week*, Leo Burnett, Grey Worldwide, *Cosmopolitan*, *Entertainment Weekly*, *Merrill Lynch Realty*, Metropolitan Opera Guild, Museum of Modern Art, *Money*, *New York Magazine*, *The New Yorker*, Harcourt Brace, Henry Holt Publishing, Farrar, Straus and Giroux, *Self*, *Seventeen*, *Sports Illustrated*, Scholastic, *Town and Country*, Harper Collins, *Wine and Spirits*, Icon Shoes and other companies and publications.



I try to convey a feeling of movement and “lighthearted chaos” in my illustrations. I think all my artwork reveals part of my personality, which is very dynamic, energetic and fun loving. I have exhibited my paintings in the US and in Poland. Recently I have been painting a series of friends’ portraits, using oils, gouache and watercolor. I teach Fashion Drawing and Color Theory at Parsons School of Design, and Drawing and Painting at Queensborough Community College.

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BEATA SZPURA



## **Stefan TURK**

ITALY/SLOVENIA

**S**tefan Turk was born in Trieste (Italy) in 1974 into the Slovene community. He graduated in history of art from the Literature and Philosophy faculty of the University of Trieste. In 1990, 1991, 1992 and 1993, he attended summer open-air painting courses held by the Triestine artist, Nino Perizi. He also frequented an illustrations course by Svetlan Junakovič at the International foundation for children's illustrations in Sarmede (near Treviso). He has illustrated texts for Slovene children's magazines, such as *Maurica* and *Ciciban*, and also works actively with the children's magazine *Galeb*, illustrating texts. In 2010, he published his first illustrated book with a Slovene publishing house, Goga. He is a member of the "KONS" art association for the Slovene minority community and of the association of artists of the Slovene northern coast. He works as both supervisor and educator in a number of art workshops and summer camps for children organized by cultural associations and schools.

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STEFAN TURK



## **Victoria USOVA**

USA

**I** was born and raised in Lviv, Ukraine. I now tries to grow sunflowers in Staten Island. I am married with three kids, a ragdoll cat named Totoro, and a red grumpy cat. I homeschool my children. I derive countless inspiration from them. I

mostly work with watercolors, however my latest passion is wool felting and I really enjoy seeing my characters become toys.

I love colors, the sound of paper, the feel of the paintbrush in my hand. I love green tea and jasmine, and the smell of spring in the air and Irish music. My watercolors are crystallized memories of childhood and dreams that take me back there.

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VICTORIA USOVA

# Stefano VITALE

## ITALY

Stefano was born in Padua, Italy in 1958. After attending the University of Verona he went to Los Angeles with a scholarship to study economics at UCLA. Impressed by the sunny California lifestyle he transferred to USC where he graduated with a Bachelor of Science in economics and social sciences. Because of excessive intellectual activity he reached the conclusion that the only field where he could express his inexpressible ideas were in the arts so he applied to the Art Center College of Design in Pasadena. During his years in California, Stefano traveled extensively throughout Mexico where the influence of folk art can still be seen in his work today. After graduating Stefano went to New York City to work. 15 years in New York City and hundreds of subway rides later, he decided to return to his native Italy. He currently lives in Venice and now commutes in a colorful wooden boat.



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STEFANO VITALE



## Ivan MALKOVYCH, Publisher UKRAINE

Poet and publisher Ivan Malkovych founded the publishing house *A-BA-BA-HA-LA-MA-HA*. Born in 1961 in Berezhiv Nyzhniy in the Ukrainian Carpathian Mountains, he graduated from the violin class of the Ivano-Frankivsk Music Academy and from the Faculty of Philology at Taras Shevchenko State University in Kiev. As an editor, compiler, author, and translator of dozens of books for children, Malkovych has been called by *The Book Review* “a man maniacally devoted to the idea of “the Ukrainian book of especially good quality.”

*A-BA-BA-HA-LA-MA-HA*, the first privately-owned children’s book publisher to be established in an independent Ukraine, is Ukraine’s finest children’s book publisher and one of the most esteemed producers of children’s literature in Central and Eastern Europe. Translated from baby talk, “A-BA-BA-HA-LA-MA-HA” means “the alphabet” and indeed the first title published in July 1992 was the picture book *The Ukrainian Alphabet*. More than half of *A-BA-BA-HA-LA-MA-HA*’s titles have won awards at book competitions, and several million children “from 2 to 102” through their patronage consider *A-BA-BA-HA-LA-MA-HA* books their favorite.

The remarkable artistic and aesthetic qualities of *A-BA-BA-HA-LA-MA-HA* editions reflect the publisher's continuing collaboration with outstanding illustrators such as Vladyslav Yerko and Kost' Lavro. Through these efforts the books of *A-BA-BA-HA-LA-MA-HA* have become an indispensable attribute of every cultured Ukrainian family and one of the most delightful cultural contributions by Ukrainian artists to an international readership. The demanding creative and production standards applied to its many prize-winning titles have attracted readers worldwide.

Among the publisher's most popular titles are: the *Mini-Wonder* book series (with a total print run of 1,600,000 copies), *The ABC*, *The 100 Fairy Tales* three-volume edition, the *Favorite Poems* two-volume edition, *The Snow Queen*, *Alice in Wonderland*, *Harry Potter*, *Toreadors from Vasivka*, *Lisa and her Dreams*, and *The Night Before Christmas*. *A-BA-BA-HA-LA-MA-HA* has held seven major exhibitions of illustrations to their books as well as a joint exhibition with British artists.

Artists in this exhibition representing *A-BA-BA-HA-LA-MA-HA* include Kateryna Shtanko, Kost' Lavro, Olech Petrenko-Zanevsky, Victor Garkusha, Valerie Sokolova and Vladyslav Yerko.



## Victor GARKUSHA

UKRAINE

**B**orn in Kiev in 1980, Garkusha is a graduate of the Taras Shevchenko Public Art School who initially studied ceramics and later painting. He also graduated in graphic arts from the Kiev Polytechnic Institute.

Among Garkusha's works published by *ABABAHALAMAHA* are A. Mohylny's *The Nymph and the Ant King* (2006); *The Ukrainian Space Encyclopedia* (2009); *100 Fairy Tales, Volume 3* (2012); and *Japanese Fairy Tales*, (2014).

[www.ababahalamaha.com.ua](http://www.ababahalamaha.com.ua)

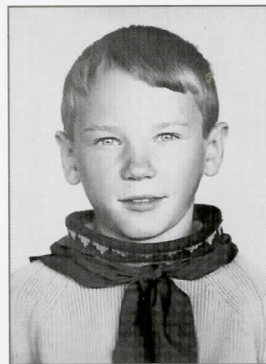
VICTOR GARKUSHA



## Kost' LAVRO

UKRAINE

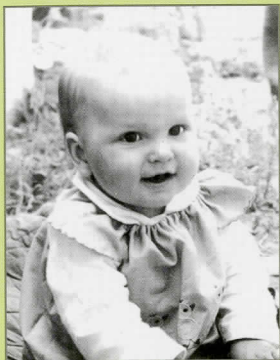
**B**orn in 1961 near Dykanka in the Poltava region, a landscape made famous by Gogol's short stories, Lavro finished the Ukrainian Republic Art School and graduated from the Graphic Arts Faculty of the Ukrainian Academy of Book Printing. A member of the Union of Artists of Ukraine, a laureate of Ukraine's Taras Shevchenko National Award, and the leading artist of *A-BA-BA-HA-LA-MA-HA*, Lavro and his creative path has been inextricably linked with the establishment and success of the publishing house. His now classic and beloved images of rabbits and cats have delighted hundreds of thousands of children. Lavro's books have been translated and published in the United States, France, Switzerland, and other countries and he is a regular contributor to *Pomme d'Api*, France's most popular children's publication.







KOST' LAVRO



## **Olech PETRENKO-ZANEVSKY** UKRAINE

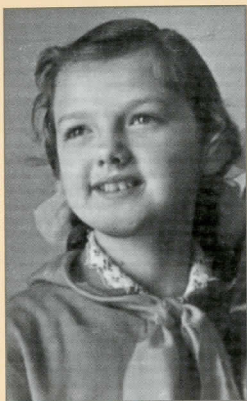
**O**lech Petrenko-Zanevsky was born in 1965 in the central Ukrainian city of Vinnytsia. He graduated from the Ukrainian Republic Art School in 1983 and from the book design workshop of the Ukrainian Academy of Arts in 1992. A member of the Ukrainian

Artists Union, he is a brilliant illustrator of several children's books who is frequently invited to participate in various international exhibitions. His illustrations for *A-BA-BA-HA-LA-MA-HA* include *100 Fairy Tales* (2005), *The Story of a Piglet* (2005), and *The Bully Goat* (1994).

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OLECH PETRENKO-ZANEVSKY





## **Kateryna SHTANKO**

UKRAINE

**B**orn in Simferopol in 1951, Kateryna Shtanko finished the Crimean Art School in 1973 and graduated from the Ukrainian Academy of Arts in 1979. A laureate of the Lesia Ukrayinka Award, Shtanko has won numerous awards in Republican, All-Soviet Union, and international exhibitions. She is the author of several dozen books for children and is one of the most renowned illustrators in Ukraine. Shtanko has illustrated numerous works for *ABA-BA-HA-LA-MA-HA*, including Ivan Malkovych's *The Little Golden Spider* (2009), *Favorite Poems, Volumes 1-3* (2004-12), and *100 Fairy Tales, Volumes 1-3* (2005-12).



KATERYNA SHTANKO

# Vladyslav YERKO

UKRAINE

Vladyslav Yerko's illustrations for *The Snow Queen*, *The Tinderbox*, *Child Roland and Other Knight's Tales*, *The Tragedy of Hamlet, Prince of Denmark*, *Alice in Wonderland*, and *Gulliver's Travels* have won global recognition. The internationally celebrated writer Paulo Coelho has called Yerko's *The Snow Queen* as "perhaps the most extraordinary children's book I have ever seen." The rights to Yerko's books have been acquired by publishers in fifteen countries throughout the world—from the UK to South Korea and Australia.



Born in Kyiv in 1962, Yerko studied in the Faculty of Book Graphics at the Ivan Fedorov Polygraphic Institute in Kyiv from 1984 to 1990 and worked in film poster design. In 1987 he received an award at the Moscow International Poster Competition. In 1989 he started working in book graphics and illustrated the works of Hans Christian Andersen, William Shakespeare, Jonathan Swift, Lewis Carroll and others. Yerko—a laureate of the Lesia Ukrayinka Award, and winner of numerous other prestigious exhibitions, including "Man of Letters" when he was named best artist for 2002 by the Moscow Review of Books is today considered the leading Ukrainian maestro of book illustration.

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