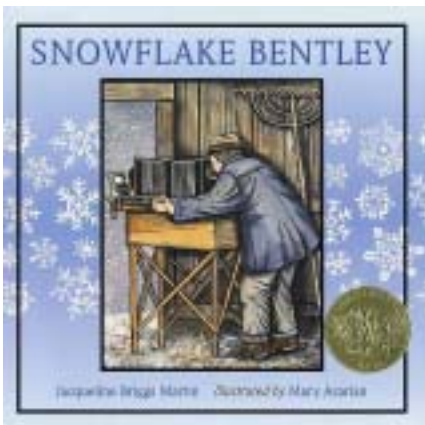


THE Center for Children's & Young Adult Literature

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The University of Tennessee ■ Knoxville, Tennessee



© Illustration from *Snowflake Bentley*, written by Jacqueline Briggs Martin, illustrated by Mary Azarian, published by Houghton Mifflin Company, 1998



© Illustration from *A Gardener's Alphabet*, written and illustrated by Mary Azarian, published by Houghton Mifflin Company, 2000

Above: Recent books featuring Mary Azarian's wondrous woodcuts include *A Gardener's Alphabet* and the 1999 Caldecott Medal winner, *Snowflake Bentley*.



Mary Azarian in her studio.

Mary Azarian

Woodcut artist to visit Knoxville in February

The University of Tennessee Center for Children's and Young Adult Literature will host woodcut artist Mary Azarian in Knoxville from February 17-21, 2003. Inspired by the rural Vermont landscape where she lives, Mary Azarian has illustrated over 40 books. In 1999, *Snowflake Bentley*, a picture book about Vermont's famous photographer of snow crystals won the Caldecott Award. She continues to illustrate picture books and produces a yearly calendar of black and white woodcuts.

Concurrent with her visit, the UT Visual Arts Committee is sponsoring a showcase of Mary Azarian's work in the UT University Center Concourse from February 7 through March 15. The exhibit contains approximately 50 woodcut prints, hand tinted with watercolor, that have been organized for national tour by the National Center for Children's Illustrated Literature in Abilene, Texas.

The community is invited to attend a presentation by Ms. Azarian on Monday, February 17, at 7 pm in the University Center Shiloh Room, with book signing to follow. Prior to the talk, Ms. Azarian will be honored at a 6 pm reception in UC room 224.

Mary Azarian grew up on her grandfather's small Virginia farm, where she became an adept gardener. She majored in art at Smith College,

The Center for Children's & Young Adult Literature invites the public to hear

**WOODCUT ARTIST
& CALDECOTT WINNER**

Mary Azarian

7 PM, Monday, February 17
Shiloh Room, University Center
University of Tennessee Campus
Book signing will follow the lecture.

Reception:

6 PM, Room 224, University Center
CO-SPONSORED BY UT LIBRARIES, UT SCHOOL OF ART,
& UT VISUAL ARTS COMMITTEE

Exhibit:

"The Woodcut Art of
Mary Azarian"
February 7 - March 15
University Center Concourse
SPONSORED BY UT VISUAL ARTS COMMITTEE

studying under woodcut expert and sculptor Leonard Baskin. When she moved to Cabot, Vermont in the late 1960's, Azarian's rural lifestyle, love of nature, and attraction to print-making converged when she opened Farmhouse Press, creating and selling correspondence cards, prints, and books. In the 1970's she obtained a grant to create a painted set of alphabet cards for every primary classroom in the state of Vermont; these were the basis for her first book, *A Farmer's Alphabet*.

(continued)

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Mary Azarian, continued

A Farmer's Alphabet, published in 1981, shows the distinctly rustic and rural New England scenes of barns and woods, boots and snowy weather. The culture that inspired Robert Frost's poems comes to life in her woodcut images. "I basically draw a design on a flat plank of wood and cut away everything that I don't want to appear in the design," says Azarian of her art. "My favorite moments in illustrating a book comes when I am able to suspend conscious thought and let my hands and eyes work guided by the well of creativity that is nourished in all of us."

Azarian's initial prints were done in black and white, but she soon began experimenting with color. Relying on her training as a painter as well as a printmaker, Azarian developed non-traditional techniques for adding color with water-based paint blocks rather than with individual color blocks. As her skill in creating woodcut illustration developed, she began tinting the wood-blocks in pastel, retaining the folk-look of a country Vermonter's life, but offering a new level of detail.

In addition to her presentation at UT of February 17, Mary Azarian will demonstrate her woodblock techniques in several school classes in the community throughout the week.



Laura Tillotson

Teaching ethics through children's literature was subject of September talk

On September 25, Laura Tillotson, editor of *Book Links: Connecting Books, Libraries, and Classrooms*, presented in Hodges Library auditorium a fascinating lecture on teaching ethics through children's literature. Presenting several dozen picture books, middle grade novels, and informational books, Tillotson talked about how these works can be used by librarians, parents, and teachers to present children with ethical dilemmas and spark discussion about the protagonists' decision-making process. Tillotson discussed how these books tie in well to character education curricula, and also presented books particularly appropriate for young children that can help them explore their feelings and understand emotions that do not necessarily have an ethical basis.

Book Links is a highly respected national publication among classroom teachers, and public and school librarians. Published by *Booklist* publications of the American Library Association, *Book Links* focuses on literature appropriate for children in grades K-8. The magazine is designed for librarians, teachers, booksellers, parents, and all other adults who have an interest in connecting children with high quality literature. Since joining *Book Links* as editor in December 2000, Tillotson has presented lectures of this kind to audiences around the country.

All attendees received free copies of the magazine. The evening closed with Tillotson raffling off free annual subscriptions.



A Gardener's Alphabet, "arbor" to "zucchini."



© Illustrations from *A Gardener's Alphabet*, written and illustrated by Mary Azarian, published by Houghton Mifflin Company, 2000

Fans Brave Weather to Hear Kimberly Willis Holt

In Jack Pretutsky's beloved children's poem, "It's Raining Pigs and Noodles," he says, "It's raining pigs and noodles, it's pouring frogs and hats..." Though neither pigs nor noodles were sighted on the evening of October 15th, children and young adult literature fans braved heavy winds and bone-chilling rain to attend a presentation by award winning author Kimberly Willis Holt in the auditorium of Hodges Library at the University of Tennessee.

Ms. Holt's books have appeared on numerous best-book lists including the American Library Association's Notable Children's Books and Best Books for Young Adults. Holt also received the prestigious National Book Award for Young People's Literature for her third novel, *When Zachary Beaver Came to Town*.

Performing to a packed auditorium, Ms. Holt lead the audience on her personal journey to becoming an author with a slide presentation followed by a question and answer session. Growing up the daughter of a chief petty officer in the United States Navy, Holt's family lived around the world and moved every few years. Those frequent moves created a yearning for a stable roots in Holt. When asked where she was from, she would longingly name the small Southern town of Forest Hills, Louisiana where her parents' families had lived for seven generations.

When her family moved to Amarillo in 1993, she fulfilled a childhood dream of being a writer. She enrolled in creative writing classes and drew on childhood memories and her old yearning for roots for assignments. A car ride with her mother in Forest Hills sparked the birth of her character Tiger Ann in *My Louisiana Sky* which was published to national acclaim in 1998. Three other novels followed in quick succession *Mister and Me* (Putnam, 1998), *When Zachary Beaver Came to Town* (Holt, 1999), and *Dancing in Cadillac Light* (Putnam, 2002).

Each of Holt's coming-of-age novels have characters and settings based on real people, real places. Against Southern backgrounds, her protagonists redefine their sense of home and family. Hauntingly memorable characters, multiple themes, and poetic imagery trademark Holt's work.

An autograph session and book sales ended the evening.

Kudos to our Board Members

Recent publications and honors

Ed Sullivan. "Talking with Jim Arnosky." *Book Links* 12.2 (October/November 2002): 37-42.

Ed Sullivan was awarded a 2003 Ezra Jack Keats/de Grummond Collection Research Fellowship from the University of Southern Mississippi.

New Website!

The Center for Children's & Young Adult Literature has a beautifully redesigned website. Much thanks to UT librarian Margaret Casado for her excellent work. Visit us at:

www.lib.utk.edu/refs/ccyal/

We gratefully acknowledge the publishers who contribute to the Center for Children's & Young Adult Literature:

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652 John C. Hodges Library
The University of Tennessee
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The Center for Children's & Young Adult Literature is a collaborative effort of the University of Tennessee Libraries, the School of Information Sciences, the College of Education, Health & Human Sciences, and local schools and libraries.

*The community
is invited!*

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More info on page 1...

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Young Adult
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