

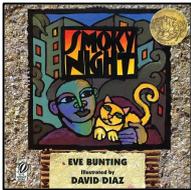


David Díaz

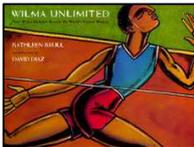
David Díaz has always been a “drawer.” From first grade on, Díaz explored various materials and styles. He won art contests in high school and apprenticed with sculptor Duane Hanson. He worked in graphic design, illustrating projects on the side until he was offered the chance to illustrate *Smoky Night* (Bunting, 1994). From there, Díaz’s career as a children’s literature illustrator has grown.

His illustrations are often bold, using thick lines and vivid colors. Díaz has the ability to match his illustration styles perfectly with the text. In an interview, Díaz said: “It is important to give the manuscript the honor and respect it deserves.” He spends time with the manuscripts, does initial sketches, and lets the text lead him. Díaz’s final products show the honor and respect he has for the author, text, and content.

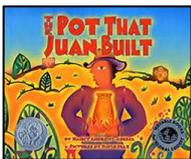
Selected Bibliography



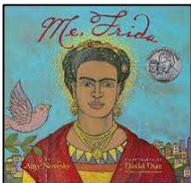
Smoky Night (1994). Bunting’s text, inspired by the Los Angeles riots, is a cautionary tale, and Díaz used symbolic items, like shards of glass and spilled rice, as background collages. In this incredible story, Díaz contrasted these detailed, textured background collages with simple, bold, dark paintings. His brilliant design and illustrations evoke strong emotional responses for readers. It is no wonder that Díaz won the Caldecott Medal for this picturebook.



Wilma Unlimited: How Wilma Rudolph Became the World's Fastest Woman (1996). In this picturebook biography, Díaz brilliantly illustrates the inspirational story of Wilma Rudolph. After contracting polio at age 5, Wilma was told she would never run again. She proved everyone wrong with persistence and hard work. Díaz conveys her strength and courage in every bold illustration.



The Pot That Juan Built (2003). Díaz’s vibrant illustrations in this picturebook biography capture the energy of the text and the poetic style that follows the traditional *This is the House that Jack Built* form. His bright colors and attention to detail bring readers in, attracting them to the traditional pots that Juan has built.



Me, Frida (2010). Again, in this picturebook biography, Díaz uses the style of the artist to guide his illustrations. His use of color in this book are more reflective of the colors that Kahlo used in her paintings. As readers study these illustrations, they develop an understanding of Frida, her life, and her work.

Selected Awards

- Caldecott Medal (*Smoky Night* by Eve Bunting)
- Pura Belpré Awards (*The Pot That Juan Built* by Nancy Andrews-Goebel, *¡Sí, Se Puede! Yes, We Can!* by Carmen T. Bernier-Grand, and *Diego: Bigger Than Life* by Carmen T. Bernier-Grand)
- School Library Journal Best Book of the Year (*Smoky Night* by Eve Bunting)
- Parent's Choice Award (*Ocean's Child* by Christine Ford and Trish Holland)
- New York Times Best Illustrated Book (*The Little Scarecrow Boy* by Margaret Wise Brown)

Links of Interest

- National Center for Children's Illustrated Literature Profile: <http://www.nccil.org/experience/artists/diaz/>
- Society of Children's Book Writers and Illustrators profile: https://www.scbwi.org/illustrator-gallery/illustrator-detail/?illustrator_id=9991
- Interview with David Díaz: <https://henryherz.wordpress.com/2013/10/12/interview-with-caldecott-medal-winning-illustrator-david-diaz/>

David Díaz is a member of USBBY. Why not join him?



This featured author profile was prepared by Bettie Parsons Barger, March 2016.