



South Asia Book Award

346 Eggers Hall, Syracuse University
Syracuse NY 13244 – (315) 443-2553
www.southasiabookaward.org



2017 South Asia Book Award for Children's and Young Adult Literature

2017 Award Winners

Maya by Mahak Jain; illustrated by Elly MacKay (Owlkids Books, 2016). The loss of her father and a blackout in her Indian city combine to distress Maya. Her mother's bedtime tale of a legendary banyan tree kindles the child's imagination, bringing her comfort and soothing memories of her father. Alluring illustrations of the lush dream landscape and animals Maya visualizes will engage readers. (Grades K-3)

What Elephants Know by Eric Dinerstein (Disney-Hyperion, 2016). In the Nepalese Borderlands, twelve-year-old orphan Nandu realizes his destiny as a "mahout" (elephant driver). Through a vivid jungle setting and Nandu's first-person narration, this story reveals the rich diversity of the natural world and the connection between humans and animals. (Grades 4-7)

2017 Honor Books

Book Uncle and Me by Uma Krishnaswami; illustrated by Julianna Swaney (Groundwood Books, 2016). Do you think kids can really make a difference? Yasmin Kader is usually pretty wrapped up in her own world, but when some very terrible events happen, she pulls herself out, up, and into action! Will new Mayor Samuel save Book Uncle's book stall? Find out in this exciting story for middle-level readers! (Grades 2-4)

A Long Pitch Home by Natalie Dias Lorenzi (Charlesbridge, 2016). A little Pakistani boy's heartwarming and humorous tale of adjusting to life in America where so much is different from his home country yet so much is similar. Family, friends, baseball, new holidays, and plans for helping his father come home soon keep Bilal busy as seasons change and America becomes home. (Grades 3-6)

2017 Highly Commended Books

The Boy and the Bindi by Vivek Shraya; illustrated by Rajni Perera (Arsenal Pulp Press, 2016). In this celebration of gender and cultural differences, a young South Asian boy becomes fascinated with his mother's bindi, the red dot commonly worn by Hindu women, and wishes to have one of his own. Rather than chiding him, she agrees and explains its cultural significance, allowing him permission to be more fully himself. (Grades PreK-3)

When Bholu Came Back by Kavitha Punniyamurthi; illustrated by Niloufer Wadia (Tulika Press, 2016). Did you know that camels can be excellent problem-solvers? *When Bholu Came Back* shows us just how much a camel can care for his owner and a difficult "situation." The Taparia Camel Safari business can always use one more camel, so come along for the ride in this fun story for very young readers. (Grades PreK-3)

One Half from the East by Nadia Hashimi (HarperCollins, 2016). Obayda, a 10-year-old girl in modern day Afghanistan, is shocked when her family informs her she must become a bacha posh, a girl dressed as a boy, and called Obayd. When her friend, Rahim, is suddenly forced to go back to being a girl, Obayda chases a rainbow to keep the freedom she has experienced. (Grades 4-8)

Rani Patel in Full Effect by Sonia Patel (Cinco Puntos Press, 2016). Rani Patel feels like an outsider. Not only is her family the only Indians on a remote Hawaiian island, but her father has left the family for a younger woman. The only arena in which she feels alive is participating in the island's underground hip-hop scene as an MC. Rani's raps tell the story of a strong Indian woman, even though her love life with an older man and memories of a past tragedy threaten to bring her down. Will her rhythmic rhymes give her the strength to confront these demons? (Grades 9-12)

The 2017 South Asia Book Award Ceremony and Presentation will be held in Lansing, MI, in conjunction with the Michigan Library Association Annual Conference, October 19, 2017.