



FOCAL Points~~



VOL XL. NO. 4

FALL 2018

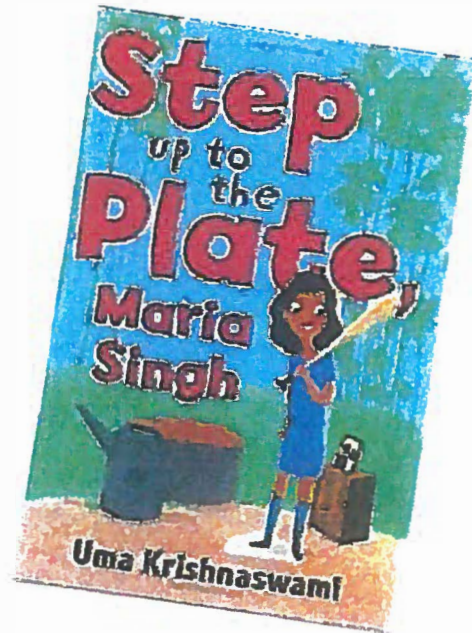
FRIENDS OF CHILDREN AND LITERATURE -- CENTRAL LIBRARY

For more news, go to www.FOCALcentral.org

STEP UP TO THE PLATE, MARIA SINGH

As this issue goes to press, the Dodgers and the Boston Red Sox are locked in a struggle in the World Series. Fans in the stands and your editor here at home are transfixed by the struggles of Kershaw and the heroics of Puig, as they step up to the plate.

The obstacles for Maria Singh are different, but they are equally daunting, as she fights for an opportunity to participate in the girls baseball team at her school. Maria copes with the firm disapproval of her traditionalist Mexican mother and the many financial worries of her doting Punjabi father as she tries to fit in with the other students at school during the waning days of World War II. Humor and tension compete in this novel with its account of paper drives, labor tensions, and worries about soldiers at the front.

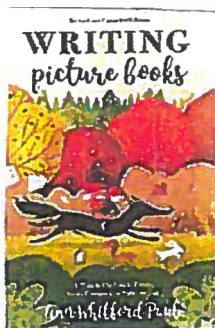
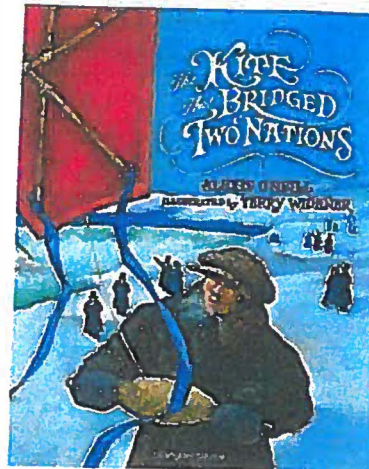


Come hear author Uma Krishnaswami describe her inspiration and research for this riveting story of growing up in California during World War II, at the annual FOCAL luncheon, which will be held at Smeraldi's Restaurant in the Millennium Biltmore Hotel, on December 8, 2018 at noon. Reservation form is on page 6.

FOCAL AUTHOR PANEL

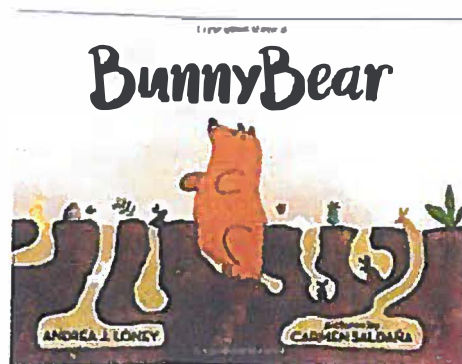
There wasn't an empty seat in the house as eager fans flocked to find space in Meeting Room A to greet the distinguished panel of authors discuss "*Why I Write for Children.*"

Alexis O'Neill began by describing the reactions from children about her earlier book, *Loud Emily*. She noticed that children could relate to a character that was not perfect in every way. And who of us has not encountered "Mean Jean, the Recess Queen" in our lives. Alexis also writes a column for authors about school visits for the *SCBWI Bulletin*. Look for this publication in your local library, or better yet, join the Society of Children's Book Writers & Illustrators, and receive your own copy of the *Bulletin*.



Ann Whitford Paul demonstrated how she used to enjoy reading to her own children, and was motivated to write stories for "read and share" times. Her bookshelf includes titles as varied as *Twas the Late Night of Christmas* and *Mañana Iguana*, and a new edition of *Writing Picture Books*, published by Writers' Digest.

Andrea J. Loney told of her passion for writing. She writes stories and poems while standing in lines, waiting for a bus, or watching a pot boil. She has always been a "scribbler", she said, and was thrilled beyond words when her first manuscript was accepted. Your reporter purchased a copy of *Bunnybear*, inscribed to Isla Rose, for a great-granddaughter in Australia. It is her new favorite book.



The whole morning was glorious. The Library Store sold piles of the authors' books, which were eagerly snapped up, after a vigorous question and answer session, hosted by Program Chair Carol Raby. We are going to repeat this event in March. So, look in the next issue of *Focal Points* to learn about the next panel of authors, and come prepared for a stimulating discussion.

WELCOME , FRIENDS

Central Library was full of friends (and Friends) on Saturday, October 20.

The Library welcomed all of the Friends groups throughout the system for an annual meeting to thank them for the hard work they do all year, and to brainstorm ways to make the path smoother.

Caroline Gill and Brooke Sheets represented FOCAL. Kathryn Wilcox "stepped up to the plate" at the book sale to give hard-working Lara Clardy a helping hand. Caroline also represented Bruckman Rare Book Friends, as Virginia and Renny were busy at the Bruckman book sale table.

Caroline reported that after a yummy buffet breakfast, and remarks by keynote speaker Linda Fowells, Executive Vice-President, Community Partners, the audience broke up into smaller groups to brainstorm ideas on such topics as "Fund-Raising Beyond Book Sales" and "How to Grow your Membership." Caroline attended the latter discussion, and reports that FOCAL is already doing much of what the speaker suggested, such as: Create and circulate a newsletter: offer an annual luncheon or dinner: and invite members to sit on various committees on a rotating basis.

Folks, we need your help. Let us know if you have an idea for an event or program that you believe will increase attendance or grow our membership. You can contact anyone on the FOCAL Board, or e-mail Renny (see page 5) with your ideas. The three best plans will receive a gift sock puppet. Sock puppets will also be for sale at the November and December book sales for holiday gift-giving. See you there !!

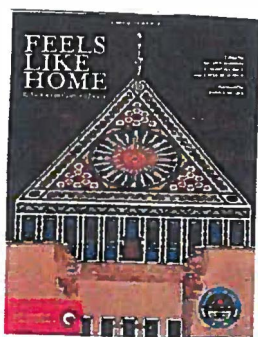
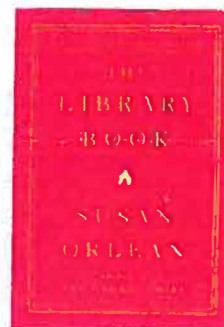


CENTRAL LIBRARY REOPENING ANNIVERSARY

The weekend of October 13 and 14 was a star-studded, activity-filled gala, with programs for all ages and tastes, from story times for the youngest to a virtual reality experience for the most daring. But the icing on the cake was the Sunday afternoon discussion with David Ulin and Susan Orlean, about her latest publication, *The Library Book*.

A full auditorium listened attentively as Susan Orlean described her discovery of how libraries have influenced her life, and how she felt compelled to articulate this attachment by learning more about Central Library, and particularly about the library's rise from the ashes of the tragic fire in 1986. Susan described her many interviews with staff in the building, and her meticulous research into the fire and its aftermath. Her book explores the history of the Los Angeles Public Library, and describes some of the institution's most colorful directors.

The first chapter is riveting. Susan describes in meticulous detail the growth and path of the fire, the courageous firefighters who fought it, and the dismay of the librarians as they survey the heartbreaking loss of valuable and irreplaceable items from the collection. She explores the investigation of the causes of the fires, and shares the frustrating conclusions that the evidence burned along with the books.



A second book was also featured at this event. *Feels Like Home: Reflections on Central Library*, co-authored by Sheryn Morris, Christina Rice and James Sherman, is a collection of essays by staff. Some of the authors share their memories of "Old Central," and others describe the "new normal," as they describe the story of this historic building and its hard-working staff. It is heavily illustrated with pictures from the comprehensive Photo Collection, as well as with personal snapshots,

Both books are available at the Library Store. Browse their extensive selection, or you can also order online at The Library Store Los Angeles.

**THIRTY-NINTH ANNUAL FOCAL AWARD LUNCHEON
and ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING**

HONORING THE 2018 FOCAL AWARD WINNER

**STEP UP TO THE PLATE, MARIA SINGH
by UMA KRISHNASWAMI**

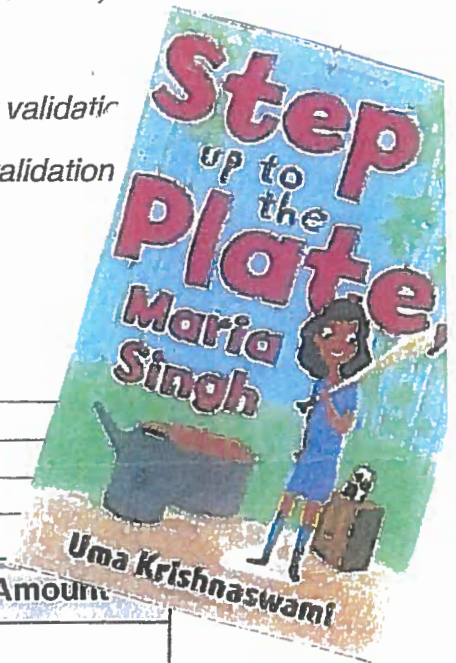
**SATURDAY, DECEMBER 8, 2018 AT THE MILLENIUM BILTMORE HOTEL
SMERALDI'S RESTAURANT, 506 SOUTH GRAND AVENUE,
LOS ANGELES, 90071. (213) 624-1011)**

*Parking at Westlawn Garage, 524 S. Flower \$1.00 with library validation
Biltmore Hotel Parking, Valet Parking, \$ 8.00 with restaurant validation*

12:00 Noon Luncheon, Mediterranean Buffet

Reservation Form

Name _____ Phone _____
Address _____
City, State, ZIP _____
Email _____



Reservation Options	Number	X	Price	Amount
Luncheon FOCAL Members @\$55 each		X	\$55.00	
Luncheon Non-Members @ \$60 ea.		X	\$60.00	
Lunch + \$25 Basic Membership @ \$80 ea.		X	\$80.00	
Lunch + \$60 Contributing Membership @ \$115 each		X	\$115.00	
Lunch + \$100 Sustaining Membership @ \$155 ea.		X	\$155.00	
TOTAL AMOUNT ENCLOSED				\$

Please send this completed form and checks, made payable to FOCAL, Monday, Dec. 3rd, to Renny Day, 15221 Via de las Olas, Pacific Palisades, CA 90272. Tickets will be held at the door.

____ I prefer to receive FOCAL Points by e-mail. My e-mail address is:

____ I prefer to receive FOCAL Points via U.S. Postal Service

******* MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION *******

Please send renewals to:

Renny Day/ 15221 Via de las Olas / Pacific Palisades, CA 90272

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____

Membership is for calendar year, January through December. Dues are deductible.

New _____ Renewal _____ Basic \$25 _____ Contributing \$60 _____

Sustaining \$100 (autographed award book) _____

Lifetime \$1000 (autographed award book) _____

Selena Terrazas, Department Manager

Brooke Sheets, Senior Librarian, Children's Librarian

Helene Mochedlover, FOCAL Points Editor

FOCAL

Children's Literature Department

Los Angeles Public Library

630 West Fifth Street

Los Angeles, CA 90071