

## 2004 Notable Children's Recordings

**2004 Notable Children's Recordings Committee:** Chair Thomas Barthelmess, Mary Burkey, Adrienne Leah Furness, Virginia Gustin, Annisha Jeffries, Kathleen Apuzzo Krasniewicz, Amy Lilien-Harper, Glen M. Sloan.

**African Playground. Putumayo World Music. 41 minutes. 1 CD, ISBN: 1587590654. 212-625-1400**

All Ages. As bright and varied as the countries from which they come, thirteen songs exalt the imagination with dancing rhythms and welcoming voices. Abundant liner notes, photographs, and a glossary of terms make this a package as informative as it is joyous.

**Amber Was Brave, Essie Was Smart: The Story of Amber and Essie Told Here in Poems and Pictures. Live Oak Media. 28 minutes. hardcover book with cassette, ISBN: 1591121868; hardcover book with CD, ISBN: 1591123399. 800-788-1121**

Grades K-3. With separate narrators for sisters Amber and Essie, and their mother, this poignant recording perfectly complements Vera B. Williams' touching story, simply told in pictures and poems.

**The Carnivorous Carnival. Harper Children's Audio. 5 hours. 4 CDs, ISBN: 0060566264. 212-207-7229**

Grades 3-6. Tim Curry was born to read Lemony Snicket's *Series of Unfortunate Events*. Here, his over-the-top narration wrings every ounce of entertainment from the ninth, satirically gothic installment.

**Charlie Bone and the Time Twister. Listening Library. 6 hours, 42 minutes. 4 cassettes, ISBN: 0807218995. 212-782-9462**

Grades 3-7. When Henry Yewbeam, a long-lost relative of Charlie's, "twists in" from the past (1916 to be exact), he quickly finds himself enveloped in the magical intrigue of Bloor's Academy. Simon Russell Beale adds to the magic as he spins the second saga of the mystery and fantasy that surround Charlie Bone.

**A Corner of the Universe. Listening Library. 4 hours, 30 minutes. 3 cassettes, ISBN: 0807216712; 4 CDs, ISBN: 080721776X. 800-541-5525**

Grades 4-7. Hattie Owen's world is turned upside-down by the unexpected arrival of her Uncle Adam, who up to now has lived in a facility for people with what Hattie's mother whisperingly refers to as "mental problems." Judith Ivey demonstrates an amazing range of voice, distinguishing each character with poignance and dignity.

**Dreamland: World Lullabies & Soothing Songs. Putumayo World Music. 37 minutes. 1 CD, ISBN: 1587590719. 212-625-1400**

All Ages. This collection of traditional lullabies from Africa, Europe, North and South America and Asia will soothe souls young and old with bell-toned vocals and mellifluous instrumentals joined in a concert of soporific serenity.

**Ella Fitzgerald: The Tale of a Vocal Virtuosa. Weston Woods. 20 minutes. hardcover book with cassette, ISBN: 1555921752; hardcover book with CD, ISBN: 1555924980. 203-845-0197**

Grades K-4. Carefully selected vintage recordings, sound tracks, and Billy Dee Williams's sensuous voice are layered artfully to produce a time-slip to the 1930s. Prepare to be transported by the pulse and rhythms of Harlem and of Ella Fitzgerald, the Queen of Scat!

**Get Ready for Second Grade, Amber Brown. Live Oak Media. 14 minutes. paperback book with cassette, ISBN: 1591122333; paperback book with CD, ISBN: 159112364X. 800-788-1121**

PreK-Grade 2. Dana Lubotsky's lively, youthful voice is complemented by colorful, twinkling sound effects that never overwhelm in this perfectly-paced production for new readers.

**Giggle, Giggle, Quack. Weston Woods. 5 minutes. hardcover book with cassette, ISBN: 1555926916; hardcover book with CD, ISBN: 1555927017. 203-845-0197**

Grades K-3. Twangy accompaniments, bucolic sound effects, and Randy Travis' delightful reading enhance this story about what happens when Farmer Brown goes on vacation and his epistolary barnyard animals are left to their own devices.

**Indian Elephant Tea. Rounder Records. 38 minutes. 1 CD, ISBN: 1579400868. 800-223-6357**

All Ages. Children's favorites from "B-i-n-g-o" to "This Old Man" undergo a rockabilly reinvention in the capable, picking fingers of Skip Ewing and his Big Kidz Band, making for a patently irresistible, rollicking good time.

**Inkheart. Listening Library. 13 hours, 30 minutes. 10 cassettes, ISBN: 0807219517; 14 CDs, ISBN: 0807220108. 212-782-9462**

Grades 5-9. Lynn Redgrave's magical voice conjures up, one by one, each of the large cast of characters in Cornelia Funke's *Inkheart*. The subtly nuanced reading evokes the mystery underlying this engrossing tribute to books, which celebrates the power of words and of imagination.

**Midnight for Charlie Bone. Listening Library. 7 hours, 15 minutes. 5 cassettes, ISBN: 0807216631; 7 CDs, ISBN: 1400086140. 800-541-5525**

Grades 3-7. Charlie Bone may be a descendant of the magical and mesmerizing Red King, but only by discovering his paranormal endowment and surviving his stint at bleak Bloor's Academy

will his lineage be proven. Simon Russell Beale's rich, resonant reading and amazing characterizations are pitch-perfect for this fantastic mystery.

**Most Perfect Harmony. Big Canoe Records. 1 hour, 8 minutes. 1 CD. 660-882-3353**

Grades 2-6. Inspired by the expedition of Lewis and Clark, this fine collection of songs old and new celebrates the role music played, lifting spirits and knitting hearts, as the Corps of Discovery worked its way across the American wilderness some 200 years ago.

**Nicky's Jazz for Kids. Dominick Media. 34 minutes. 1 CD, ISBN: 724358190823. 212-925-0611**

All Ages. Nicky the Jazz Cat has assembled a positively catchy collection of Jazz standards from "friends" like Cab Calloway and Peggy Lee, sure to set little butts bouncing and little shoulders shaking. Resist if you dare.

**Noah's Ark. Weston Woods. 10 minutes. hardcover book with cassette, ISBN: 1555925308; hardcover book with CD, ISBN: 1555925332. 203-845-0197**

All Ages. Original dramatic music, animal sound effects, and the thundering voice of God enhance Jerry Pinkney's striking interpretation of this Old Testament favorite. Narrator Dennis Haysbert masterfully and subtly shifts his intonation to convey God's displeasure with wickedness on Earth, His love of Noah and his family, and the story's hopeful conclusion.

**Rodzina. Listening Library. 4 hours, 47 minutes. 3 cassettes, ISBN: 0807215775; 4 CDs, ISBN: 080721616X. 800-541-5525**

Grades 5-8. In Karen Cushman's well-wrought historical novel, Becky Ann Baker's expressive narration, at once young and gruff, perfectly captures the spirit of Rodzina, a tough Polish orphan girl searching for a place to belong.

**Sahara Special. Listening Library. 3 hours, 20 minutes. 2 cassettes, ISBN: 0807217212; 3 CDs, ISBN: 1400089905. 800-541-5525**

Grades 4-7. With great skill and empathy, Phylicia Rashad illuminates the pathos and humor of Sahara Jones' fifth grade year, bringing to life a classroom full of memorable characters, most especially Miss Pointy, Sahara's astute, eccentric teacher.

**Songs from the Street: 35 Years of Music. Sony Wonder. 3 hours, 30 minutes; 3 CDs, ISBN: 0738922773. 310-449-2100**

All Ages. Since 1969, Sesame Street has been a gathering place for the world's brightest stars. This collection spreads 63 tracks of glorious, witty, and simple songs across three delirious CDs. Sesame Street is now Memory Lane.

**Sweet Dreams: Lullabies for Guitar. Goatscape Music. 52 minutes. 1 CD. 510-528-9502**

All Ages. Versatile acoustic guitar master Nina Gerber performs an eclectic selection of lullabies, ranging from the conventional "Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star" and "Brahms' Lullaby" to the surprising "Last Night I Had the Strangest Dream" and "Tumbalalaika."

**The Tale of Despereaux. Listening Library. 3 hours, 30 minutes. 3 cassettes, ISBN: 0807219487; 4 CDs, ISBN: 080722006X. 212-782-9462**

Grades K-6. Sit, dear listener, and be regaled with this captivating tale of a dear, earnest mouse, his courtly love for the sweet Princess Pea, and his quest for light elemental. Graeme Malcolm's reading of one unlikely hero's saga is kissed with the magic of fairy tale.

**The Trail of the Jedi: Star Wars® Jedi Quest #2. Listening Library. 2 hours, 30 minutes. 2 cassettes, ISBN: 0807208337. 212-782-9462**

Grades 3-7. Amazing surround-sound effects enhance Jonathan Davis' deft, engaging reading of this fantastic story of a Jedi Padawan (apprentice) and his master forced to elude determined bounty hunters during a seemingly routine training exercise on the planet Ragoon 6.

**The Voyage of the Dawn Treader. Harper Children's Audio. 6 hours. 4 cassettes, ISBN: 006056444X. 212-207-7229**

Grades 3-7. Sir Derek Jacobi's conversational cadence draws listeners into this classic Narnia adventure as a coal fire invites children 'round the storyteller's feet. Pour yourself a cup of cocoa, curl up, and enjoy!

**The Wee Free Men. Harper Children's Audio. 9 hours. 7 cassettes. ISBN: 0060566256. 212-207-7229**

Grades 5-8. Determined to rescue her kidnapped baby brother from the Elf Queen, aspiring witch Tiffany Aching enlists the help of the fierce, blue, six-inch Wee Free Men. The comedy and suspense of Tiffany's quest, peppered with the thick Scottish speech of the little men, come to life through Stephen Briggs' gifted, hilarious narration.

**Where I'd Like to Be. Listening Library. 4 hours. 3 cassettes, ISBN: 0807215740. 800-541-5525**

Grades 3-6. When Maddie is sent to the East Tennessee Children's Home and her search for a family is thwarted, she must redefine just what, and who, a home can be. Narrator Denise Wilbanks inhabits each of this fine novel's unique, full-blooded characters with subtle distinction.

**Winnie-the-Pooh. Harper Children's Audio. 3 hours. 2 cassettes, ISBN: 0060540435. 212-207-7229**

All Ages. With round wit and a wry (albeit unseen) wink, Jim Broadbent restores gentleness and gentility to these love-worn stories, delivering an affectionate recording that can only be called a classic.