

2006 Notable Children's Recordings

2006 Notable Children's Recordings Committee: Mary Burkey, Olentangy Local Schools, Columbus, Ohio; Teresa Beck, Stratford (Conn.) Library Association; Carrie Harding, Heart of Texas Literature Center, Howard Payne University, Brownwood, Texas; Martha V. Parravano, The Horn Book Magazine, Boston; Mary Puleo, Everett (Mass.) Libraries; Louise L. Sherman, Leonia, N.J.; Elisabeth Simmons, Kirkwood Highway Library, New Castle, Del.; Glenna Sloan, School of Education, Queens College, CUNY, Flushing, NY; and Ellen R. Spring, Rockland District (Maine) Middle School.

Artemis Fowl #4: The Opal Deception. Listening Library. 212-782-8460. Elementary / Middle School.

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A Bear Called Paddington. Harper Children's Audio. 800-242-7737. All ages.

Stephen Fry endearingly narrates Paddington's story, providing the hero and each supporting character with a unique and charming voice, in this delightful presentation of Michael Bond's classic.

Blues Journey. Live Oak Media. 800-788-1121. Non-Fiction.

Backed by evocative harmonica and guitar riffs, the sinuous voice of acclaimed musician Richard Allen sings, speaks, and truly brings alive Walter Dean Myers's original blues poems.

The Cay. Listening Library. 212-782-8460. Elementary / Middle School.

Michael Boatman's narration of this classic survival story will captivate listeners, while the afterword by author Theodore Taylor enhances the listener's understanding of the historical setting and writing process.

Chronicles of Ancient Darkness #1: Wolf Brother. Harper Children's Audio. 800-242-7737. Elementary / Middle School.

Ian McKellen's polished narration draws the listener into the mystical ancient world of a hero, his animal ally, and their battle for survival in the first in a six-volume series by author Michelle Paver.

Giddyup! Prairie Dog Entertainment. 888-826-9743. All ages.

Gather your little buckaroos for a rousing sing-along CD featuring Western swing & bluegrass melodies that will have the whole family a-grinnin' and a-groovin'.

The Goose Girl. Full Cast Audio. 800-871-6152. Middle School.

Fantasy, romance, and intrigue take wing in Shannon Hale's stunning retelling of Grimm's fairy tale presented by a marvelous full cast and Cynthia Bishop's outstanding lyrical narration.

Gregor the Overlander. Listening Library. 212-782-8460. Elementary / Middle School.

Gregor and his sister Boots fall into the Underland, where they have fantastical adventures while seeking their imprisoned father, in Suzanne Collins's story inspired by Alice in Wonderland, masterfully narrated by Paul Boehmer.

Ish. Weston Woods. 800-243-5020. Preschool + up.

Ramon discovers art doesn't always have to be completely "right," in Peter Reynolds' fable of the creative power of "ish," expertly narrated by Chester Gregory, with music by Joel Goodman.

Judy Moody Declares Independence. Recorded Books. 800-638-1304. Elementary.

Narrator Kate Forbes conveys the spunky voice of Judy Moody who, after returning from a trip on the Boston Freedom Trail, decides to blaze her own trail of independence in this work by Megan McDonald.

The Last Apprentice: Revenge of the Witch. Harper Children's Audio. 800-242-7737. Middle School.

Christopher Evan Welch narrates with controlled, chilling menace Joseph Delaney's eerie, accessible fantasy, the first book in the Last Apprentice series, in which young Thomas Ward, newly apprenticed to the Spook, must face a terrifying witch.

The Man Who Walked Between the Towers. Live Oak Media. 800-788-1121. Non-fiction.

Author Mordicai Gerstein delivers a spellbinding narration of his Caldecott-medal chronicle of Philippe Petit's memorable aerial feat against the background of a delicately evocative soundscape.

The Minister's Daughter. Listening Library. 212-782-8460. Middle School / Young Adult.

Heather O'Neill's singular narrative style transports listeners to 17th century England where young Nell is learning her grandmother's healing lore while Grace, the minister's daughter, tries to hide her pregnancy.

The Old Country . Listening Library. 212-782-8460. Elementary / Middle School.

Tovah Feldshuh gives a spellbinding, word-perfect performance, drawing out every ounce of the humor, drama, and wisdom in Mordicai Gerstein's fable-like novella set in an unnamed, war-ravaged "Old Country."

A Pack of Lies. BBC/Chivers Children's Audio Books. 800-621-0182. Middle School / Young Adult.

As the mysterious storyteller MCC Berkshire, Andrew Sachs vividly creates voices for such diverse characters as a crusty Chinese potter and a vain teenage girl in Geraldine McCaughrean's cryptic story, winner of England's 1988 Carnegie Medal.

Private Peaceful. Recorded Books. 800-638-1304. Middle School / Young Adult.

Jeff Woodman's voicing of the youthful protagonist of Michael Morpurgo's moving and suspenseful tale of a family embroiled in the horrors of World War I couples with his mastery of a range of British accents to bring depth and nuance to a notable historical novel.

Raven's Gate. Recorded Books. 800-638-1304. Middle School / Young Adult.

Simon Prebble uses his voice to create a truly frightening atmosphere as Anthony Horowitz's tale of supernatural suspense unfolds with the forces of good and evil battling for control of an ancient gate that may unleash harm to future generations.

Revenge of the Whale: The True Story of the Whaleship *Essex*. Audio Bookshelf. 800-234-1713. Non-fiction.

This shocking survival story which chronicles the adventures, thrills, and gruesome actions of the crew of the Whaleship *Essex* is so powerfully recreated by Taylor Mali that the listener will have goosebumps and be engrossed in every word.

Scat Like That! Rounder Records. 800-768-6337. All ages.

Cathy Fink and Marcy Marxer blend musical styles, catchy sing-along lyrics, and unobtrusive education in a CD that will bring smiles each time it is played.

Some Assembly Required. Razor & Tie. 914-674-0247. All ages.

Tom Chapin has assembled a team of quality musicians for this family-friendly collection of humorous and uplifting songs that speak to the emotions of all ages.

Songs from the Neighborhood. Memory Lane Syndication. 866-877-9408. All ages.

Preschoolers, grandparents, and Generation X parents alike will find songs that touch the heart in this tribute, featuring musical gems composed by Fred Rogers and sung by a collection of musical celebrities, including Jon Secada, Amy Grant, Ricky Skaggs, and Roberta Flack.

The Star of Kazan. Recorded Books. 800-638-1304. Elementary / Middle School.

With quiet verve, her fluting voice perfect for both young heroine Annika and the elderly Rondine, Patricia Conolly reads this old-fashioned, satisfying novel set in turn-of-the-century Vienna and featuring abandoned infants, missing treasure, nefarious aristocrats, and true friends.

Tiger, Tiger. Listening Library. 212-782-8460. Middle School / Young Adult.

In a highly skilled performance of Lynne Reid Banks' novel, Jan Francis demonstrates perfect pitch and flawless timing in an understated interpretation that serves to enhance the suspenseful drama of a captivating tale set in Caesar's ancient Rome.

Urchin of the Riding Stars. Listening Library. 212-782-8460. Elementary / Middle School

Andrew Sachs' verbal virtuosity provides an enthralling listening experience in author M.I. McAllister's fable of treachery and intrigue set in a medieval animal kingdom.

Will You Sign Here, John Hancock? Weston Woods. 800-243-5020. Non-fiction

The voice of narrator Jeff Brooks echoes author Jean Fritz's light touch and gentle humor in this fine biography highlighting the great John Hancock's human foibles and many accomplishments.