



**Duncan Tonatiuh** is the winner of the 2016 (Robert F.) Sibert Award for *Funny Bones: Posada and His Day of the Dead Calaveras* (Abrams). His acceptance remarks were delivered at the ALSC Book and Media Awards Program on Monday, June 27, 2016, during the American Library Association Annual Conference.

For more information about the Sibert Medal, visit <http://bit.ly/sibert-medal>.



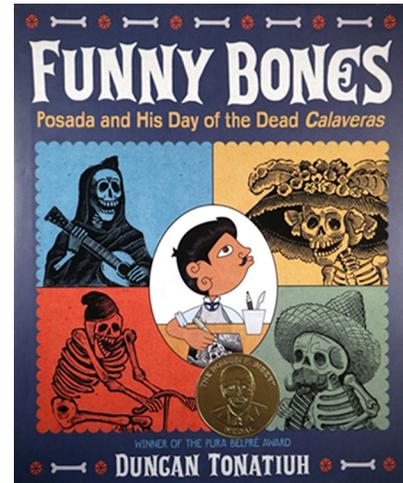
# Sibert

## MEDAL ACCEPTANCE SPEECH

**G**ood morning. I'm very happy to be here. I want to thank Elizabeth Overmyer and the Sibert committee for this honor. I know that reading all the wonderful eligible books and having to select just a few is a huge task and a labor of love. *Funny Bones* is a book that deals with an artist and a holiday that is very specific to Mexican and Mexican-American people. Receiving this medal confirms that books that are about a specific group can be appreciated by all and that they can and should be recognized by the public at large. To my fellow authors and illustrators being celebrated today as well as those who have also made powerful contributions to multi-culture literature: I am proud to be in such great company.

José Guadalupe Posada was an incredible craftsman who delivered poignant observations and sharp political commentary through his prints. His work deeply influenced Diego Rivera and José Clemente Orozco, two of the great Mexican muralists. Posada's calavera drawings have become synonymous with the Day of the Dead. It is nearly impossible to find a celebration of the holiday that does not include reproductions of his prints or images inspired by them.

Posada, however, was not recognized during his life time. His images were popular when he was alive, but very few people knew the artist behind



them. It was only after he had passed away that important artists became aware of his work. Posada was very poor when he died. So much so that he was buried in a mass grave. It is ironic that we are not sure which bones belong to the man who made images of skeletons famous around the world. I hope my book helps more people learn about this extraordinary artist.

I want to thank the team at Abrams for making *Funny Bones* such a successful project, especially my editor Howard Reeves, who is a champion of diverse and multicultural literature; and a dear friend who always looks after me—Maria Middleton, for the excellent job she did with the typography and design of the book; Jason Wells, who works relentlessly and makes sure the book gets into the right hands; and also the editorial

Duncan Tonatiuh was born in Mexico City and grew up in San Miguel de Allende where he lives today. He graduated from Parsons School for Design in New York City. He is an author and illustrator and his books have won numerous awards, among them the Belpré Medal, Sibert Medal, Tomás Rivera Mexican-American Children's Book Award, The Américas Award, and Jane Addams Children's Book Award.

**FUN FACT:** Duncan's work is inspired by ancient Mexican art. He strives to create books that honor the past and have relevance for people, especially children, today.



# Sibert

## MEDAL ACCEPTANCE SPEECH

team, the sales team, and the president, Michael Jacobs, who have been so supportive of my work and are a joy to work with.

I want to thank my family and dedicate this award to them. To my wife, Patty, for her unconditional love and for always cheering me on. To my daughter, Vida, who fills me with happiness and love beyond words. To my brother, who I can always count on. And to my parents, who have taught me so much and continue to do so.

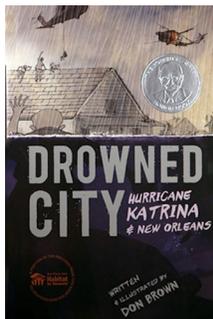
This year, more than ever, I have learned that aging, illness, and death are a part of life. My parents, and our family as a whole, have had a very challenging year. My father broke his hip fifteen months ago. He is still in a wheel chair. He has had a very slow recovery because a stroke he had years ago affected his mobility. My mother fractured her leg last October. Doctors discovered that she has multiple myeloma, a type of cancer that affects the bone marrow and that has made her bones extremely brittle. She has

been bed ridden since she fell.

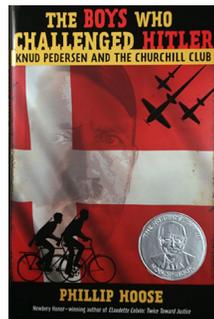
This year has been very scary at times. It has made me appreciate Posada's work and the Day of the Dead in a new and more visceral way though. El Día de Muertos is a truly special holiday. It is remarkable to find joy, color, and light in an aspect of life that can be so somber and daunting. I hope *Funny Bones* conveys that sentiment. Thank you.

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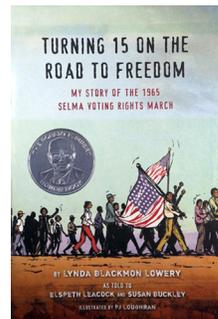
## 2016 SIBERT HONOR BOOKS



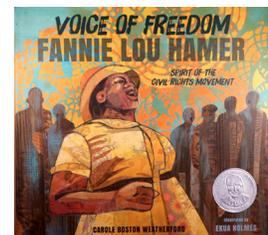
*Drowned City: Hurricane Katrina and New Orleans*  
Brown, Don  
Illus. by the author  
Houghton Mifflin Harcourt



*The Boys Who Challenged Hitler: Knud Pedersen and the Churchill Club*  
Hoose, Phillip  
Farrar Straus Giroux



*Turning 15 on the Road to Freedom: My Story of the 1965 Selma Voting Rights March*  
Lowery, Lynda Blackmon  
As told to Elspeth Leacock and Susan Buckley  
Illus. by PJ Loughran  
Dial/Penguin



*Voice of Freedom: Fannie Lou Hamer, Spirit of the Civil Rights Movement*  
Weatherford, Carole  
Boston  
Illus. by Ekua Holmes  
Candlewick



For more information about the Sibert Medal, visit <http://bit.ly/sibert-medal>.

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