

# PACKAGING YOUR IMAGINATION 2014

## SPEAKERS



**Erin Bow** is a rising star in the world of YA fantasy. Her debut novel, *Plain Kate*, won the TD Canadian Children's Literary Award in 2011. Her second, *Sorrow's Knot*, was named one of best books of 2013 by Quill & Quire and Kirkus. Erin lives in Kitchener.



**Holly Kent** is the Community Manager for the National Reading Campaign, a not for profit dedicated to making Canada a reading nation. Holly manages the NRC's entire web presence, including the blog *Readerly*, two interactive websites, and several social media accounts. Previously, Holly created the social media strategies for Scholastic Canada and the Canadian Children's Book Centre.



**Lesley Livingston** is a writer and actor living in Toronto. She is the author of several award-winning trilogies for teens, including the *Wondrous Strange* series, the *Never* series, and the *Starling* series. She is also co-writer of the middle-grade series, *The Wiggins Weird*, with Jonathan Llyr.



**Matt James** is a painter, illustrator and musician. His first picture book, *Yellow Moon*, *Apple Moon* with Pamela Porter, was a finalist for the Governor General's Award. It was followed by *I Know Here* by Laurel Croza, a multiple award winner. Matt's most recent book, *Northwest Passage*, won the Governor General's Award.



**Rob Laidlaw** is a biologist, director of wildlife protection organization Zoocheck, regular media pundit and the author of six children's books. Nominated for numerous awards, Rob was the Ontario Library Association 2013 Silver Birch Non-Fiction Award winner. *5 Elephants*, about both wild and captive elephant issues, is his latest book.



**Susin Nielsen** is the author of the best-selling novels *Word Nerd*, *Dear George Clooney: Please Marry My Mom* and the Governor General's Award-winner, *The Reluctant Journal of Henry K. Larsen*. Her new novel, *We Are All Made of Molecules*, will be published in Canada, the US and the UK in Spring 2015.

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**Debbie Ridpath Ohi** is a children's book writer/illustrator working

with Simon & Schuster, HarperCollins and Random House in the U.S. Recent illustration projects: Judy Blume middle grade and chapter books, *NAKED!* written by Michael Ian Black (Simon & Schuster). Twitter: @inkyelbows. Represented by Ginger Knowlton, Curtis Brown.



**Susan Rich** is Editor-at-Large for Little, Brown Books for

Young Readers. She publishes the work of Lemony Snicket, Jon Klassen, Dav Pilkey and others. Susan earned a Masters Degree in Children's Literature from Simmons College, began her publishing career in New York, and now lives and works in Toronto.



**Stacey Roderick** got her foot in the Kids Can Press door as a production editor in 1999. Two years later, she became an editor. In 2006, she

left to pursue a freelance career until an opportunity brought her back to Kids Can Press, where she is currently a full-time editor.



**Michael Solomon** is the Art Director at Groundwood Books.

He has been a book designer and children's book art director for over 35 years. Among the award-winning illustrators whose books he has helped bring to the world are Ian Wallace, Joanne Fitzgerald, Eric Beddows and Matt James. His design for Cybèle Young's *Out the Window* is the most recent of many Alcuin Award mentions he has received.



BC author, illustrator and cat enthusiast

**Ashley Spires** is best

known for her junior graphic novel series, *Binky The Space Cat*. She likes to make picture books too, namely 2014's *The Most Magnificent Thing* and *Edie's Ensembles*. Her work has won the Silver Birch Express, the Shining Willow and the Hackmatack awards.

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**Shelley Tanaka** is the long-time fiction editor at Groundwood Books.

She has edited thirteen Governor-General's award-winning books and works with many of the country's finest children's book writers, including Deborah Ellis, Sarah Ellis and Tim Wynne-Jones. She teaches in the Writing for Children and Young Adults MFA program at Vermont College of Fine Arts.



**Teresa Toten's** sole ambition was to grow up and become a mermaid.

Instead she got side-tracked and wrote the *Blondes Series*, *The Game*, *The Taming*, *The Onlyhouse*, *Bright Red Kisses* and *The Unlikely Hero of Room 13b*. People were very sweet about this change of career and gave her some awards in compensation.



**Paula Wing** is a playwright, translator and teacher. Her most recent play was an adaptation of *Robin Hood* for Geordie Theatre in Montréal. Her original play *Risky Phil* is in development at Young People's Theatre in Toronto.



**Tara Walker** is the Editorial Director at Tundra Books, a

division of Random House of Canada. She works with some of Canada's most accomplished writers and illustrators for children. Tara acquired and edited the best-selling *Scaredy Squirrel* series and has edited many award-winning picture books and novels, including six Governor General's Award winners.



**Cybèle Young** is the author-illustrator of several children's books,

and an internationally renowned artist best known for her paper sculpture. She won the Governor General's Award for illustration in 2011 for her book *Ten Birds* (KidsCanPress.) Her latest release is *Nancy Knows* (Tundra Books).



**Rachel Letofsky** is an Associate Agent at The Cooke Agency. She is a graduate of both the

University of Toronto, where she specialized in English Literature, and The Humber Creative Book Publishing Program. She joined The Cooke Agency in 2010 following an internship, and is currently growing her own list of clients. Rachel is particularly drawn to debut authors with whom she can work in a hands-on, collaborative fashion.

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