



Kid Lit

Spring brings new books for children covering the arts, bullying and nonfiction about racial issues during World War II **BY BRIONNA JIMERSON**

THE ARTS

THE MUSEUM

The Museum, the latest effort from author Susan Verde and illustrator Peter Reynolds, follows a young girl's visit to an art museum, where she encounters paintings reminiscent of De-gas and van Gogh and finds her own inner artistic spirit lurking within her meditative self. Verde and Reynolds know how to captivate their audience from the first moment, with pithy, descriptive prose and unpretentious illustration. Reynolds literally colors outside of the lines of his own illustrations, dismantling the barrier between "art" and "play." Children will find the little girl's journey through the museum—complete with giggles, dancing fits, and moments of intense creativity—relatable and inspiring, and parents can prepare for the inevitable visits to the local crafts store and galleries that are sure to follow finishing *The Museum*. Do not say we did not warn you!

(SUSAN VERDE AND PETER REYNOLDS, ABRAMS BOOKS, MARCH 2013)

SNEAKY ART: CRAFTY SURPRISES TO HIDE IN PLAIN SIGHT

In an era of Facebook-facilitated play dates and Pinterest boards dedicated to entertaining listless children, *Sneaky Art* is a welcome departure from digital assistance, and will help kids graduate from the crafts table to creating, exploring and manipulating the world around them. Author Marthe Jocelyn has created two-dozen super-easy "surprise" projects, no assembly (or Wi-Fi) required! *Sneaky Art* does not take itself too seriously, and that is the basis of its charm. The projects encourage youngsters to use found objects to break away from all-encompassing, overly stimulating options, and return to the inventive basics—like making a miniature washing line with cutouts from magazines and dental floss. The kids will add some fun to your morning cup of coffee by attaching a candy to the cup with an unfolded paper clip, and you cannot imagine the wonders that are possible with a park bench and some pipe cleaners!

(MARTHE JOCELYN, CANDLEWICK PRESS, MARCH 2013)

SHOWTIME: MEET THE PEOPLE BEHIND THE SCENES

Babies are returning to Broadway this season, so let the Disneyfication of the Great White Way commence! The latest rendition of *Annie: The Musical* opened in November (Park Slope parents report their daughters are obsessed), along with *Matilda The Musical* and *Piggy Nation The Musical*. So take the opportunity to teach your kids about the behind-the-scenes work that goes into bringing an idea to fruition (it's also a chance to explain the monumentally problematic *Spiderman: Turn Off the Dark*). We all know the starlets and acclaimed composers, but who are the folks that make sure the productions go off seamlessly? Who creates the scenes, organizes the talent, directs the lighting, and makes sure the bills are paid? *Showtime* is a user-friendly book, perfect for curious pre-teens developing an understanding of the world around them, and uses inventive and clear illustrations to teach readers what goes into making a production come to life, from the logistical back-end to the front-of-house publicity. In the same vein of education through interaction, check out Sylvester's other February title, *Follow Your Money: Who Gets It, Who Spends It, Where Does It Go?* (Michael Hlinka and Kevin Sylvester), as we explore the money trail, through the lenses of spending, giving, banks, taxes, shopping, fuel and fair trade.

(KEVIN SYLVESTER, ANNICK PRESS, FEBRUARY 2013)

YOKO ONO: COLLECTOR OF SKIES

Once again, what's old is new again and it's only a matter of time before your 11 year-old starts reciting the lyrics to "Baby, You're A Rich Man." Give the kids a history lesson and brush up on your own music studies with *Yoko Ono: Collector of Skies*, a reintroduction to the legendary musician-activist-artist-socialite. This biography explores the life and art of Yoko Ono from her youth in Japan to her rise as an international symbol, forever linked to one of the most renowned musical groups of our time. The tales travail her pursuit of art and meaning, complete with the juicy and timeless details of her complex and powerful relationship with John Lennon. This coffee-table-turned-child-appropriate book is as engulfing to parents as it will be to young ones, whether

