Ed Young: author and illustrator

Scarlett Rebman and Anne Bizzarro
Ed (Tse-chun) Young

- Born in 1931 in Tienstin, China
- Grew up in Shanghai
- Winner of the 1990 Caldecott Medal
- Received Caldecott Honors in 1968 and 1993
- Came to the United States to attend college
- Currently resides in New York
- Illustrates many traditional folktales (mostly Chinese)
Ed Young finds inspiration through Chinese paintings.

“A Chinese painting is often accompanied by words. They are complementary. There are things that words do that pictures never can, and likewise, there are images that words can never describe.”

– Ed Young
Works both authored and illustrated:

MY MEI MEI
BEYOND THE GREAT MOUNTAINS: A VISUAL POEM ABOUT CHINA,
I, DOKO: THE TALE OF A BASKET
SONS OF THE DRAGON KING, THE: A CHINESE LEGEND,
WHAT ABOUT ME?
MONKEY KING
LOST HORSE, THE: A CHINESE FOLKTALE,
GENESIS
MOUSE MATCH: A CHINESE FOLKTALE
VOICES OF THE HEART
CAT AND RAT: THE LEGEND OF THE CHINESE ZODIAC
DONKEY TROUBLE
NIGHT VISITORS
LITTLE PLUM
READER'S COMPANION TO THE 20TH CENTURY CHILDREN'S LITERATURE, THE,
RED THREAD
SEVEN BLIND MICE
FROM SEA TO SHINING SEA
KING'S CHESSBOARD, THE
OTHER BONE, THE
MOON MOTHER: A NATIVE AMERICAN CREATION TALE
TERRIBLE NUNG GWAMA, THE: A CHINESE FOLKTALE
HIGH ON A HILL: A BOOK OF CHINESE RIDDLES
LON PO PO: A RED-RIDING HOOD STORY FROM CHINA

*Many of these stories are retold by Ed Young*
Additional books illustrated…

**TIGER OF THE SNOWS: TENZING NORGAY:**
THE BOY WHOSE DREAM WAS EVEREST (written by Robert Burleigh)

**TAI CHI MORNING: SNAPSHOTs OF CHINA** (written by Nikki Grimes)

**DESSERT SONG** (written by Tony Johnston),

**HUNTER, THE: A CHINESE FOLKTALE** (written by Mary Casanova),

**PUP JUST FOR ME, A / A BOY JUST FOR ME** (written by Dorothea P. Seeber),

**WHITE FANG** (written by Jack London),

**OCTOBER SMILED BACK** (written by Lisa Westberg Peters)

**FIRST SONG EVER SUNG, THE** (written by Laura Krauss Melmed)

**PINOCCHIO** (written by Carlo Collodi),

**TURKEY GIRL: A ZUNI CINDERELLA STORY, THE** (written by Penny Pollock)

**BITTER BANANAS** (written by Isaac Olaleye)

**IBLIS** (written by Shulamith Levey Oppenheim)

**BICYCLE RIDER** (written by Mary Scioscia)

**SADAKO** (written by Eleanor Coerr)

**DREAMCATCHER** (written by Audrey Osofsky)

**GOODBYE GEESE** (written by Nancy White Carlstrom)

**RIME OF THE ANCIENT MARINER, THE** (written by Samuel Taylor Coleridge)

**WHAT COMES IN SPRING?** (written by Barbara Savadge Horton)

**WHILE I SLEEP** (written by Mary Calhoun)

**ALL OF YOU WAS SINGING** (written by Richard Lewis)

**EBLIS** (written by Shulamith Oppenheim)
And the list goes on...

MICE ARE NICE (written by Nancy Larrick)
CHINESE MOTHER GOOSE RHYMES (written by Robert Wyndham)
HAPPY PRINCE, THE (written by Oscar Wilde)
HIGH IN THE MOUNTAINS (written by Ruth Yaffe Radin)
VOICE OF THE GREAT BELL, THE (written by Margaret Hodges)
BIRCHES (written by Robert Frost)
CATS ARE CATS: POEMS (written by Nancy Larreck)
CHINA'S LONG MARCH: 6,000 MILES OF DANGER (written by Jean Fritz)
HAiku AROUND THE WORLD (written by Bill Higginson)
IN THE NIGHT, STILL DARK (written by Richard Lewis)
EYES OF THE DRAGON (written by Margaret Leaf)
I WISH I WERE A BUTTERFLY (written by James Howe)
WHALE SONG (written by Tony Johnston)
WHO-PADDLED-BACKWARD-WITH-TROUT (written by Howard A. Norman)
FOOLISH RABBIT'S BIG MISTAKE (written by Rafe Martin)
MOON TIGER (written by Phyllis Root)
DOUBLE LIFE OF POCAHONTAS, THE (written by Jean Fritz)
YEH-SHEN: A CINDERELLA STORY FROM CHINA (written by Ai-Ling Louie)
BO RABBIT SMART FOR TRUE: FOLKTALES FROM THE GULLAH (written by Priscilla Jaquith)
LION AND THE MOUSE, THE: AN AESOP FABLE (written by Aesop)
WHITE WAVE: A CHINESE TALE (written by Diane Wolkstein)
AND ON!

TALES FROM THE ARABIAN NIGHTS (written by N. J. Dawood)
CRICKET BOY: A CHINESE TALE (written by Feenie Ziner)
RED LION, THE: A TALE OF ANCIENT PERSIA (written by Diane Wolkstein)
YOUNG FU OF THE UPPER YANGTZE (written by Elizabeth Foreman Lewis)
8,000 STONES: A CHINESE FOLKTALE (written by Diane Wolkstein),
GIRL WHO LOVED THE WIND, THE (written by Jane Yolen)
BIRD FROM THE SEA, THE (written by Renaee Karol Weiss)
SEVENTH MANDARIN, THE (written by Jane Yolen)
GOLDEN SWANS, THE: A PICTURE STORY FROM THAILAND (written by Kermit Krueger)
TINIEST SOUND, THE (written by Melvin Evans)
EMPEROR AND THE KITE, THE (written by Jane Yolen)
YELLOW BOAT, THE (written by Margaret Hillert),
MEAN MOUSE AND OTHER MEAN STORIES, THE (written by Janice May Udry)
“One constant of his wide-ranging work has been the wish to encourage readers to look more closely at the world. Young’s searching picture-book art makes a fine start point.”

- Leonard S. Marcus, author of *Margaret Wise Brown: Awakened by the Moon.*
Some common characteristics evident in Young’s illustrations include:

- Unconventional use of paper
- Paneled illustrations
- Variety of media
- Unique perspectives
- Many double paneled spreads
- Caldecott Winner
- Little Red Riding Hood story
- Chinese Folklore
- Panels
- Pastel and watercolor media
- Pastel creates a soft effect
- The pictures draw the reader in
- Look right into the eyes of the wolf
“In each book, the medium serves as an effective bridge for spiriting readers past the surfaces of things: allowing us to discover, for instance, in the shape-shifting pastel and watercolor illustrations of *Lon Po Po*—the 1990 Caldecott winner—the hidden danger that awaits the story’s heroines.”

-Leonard S. Marcus,
From Publishers Weekly

This version of the Red Riding Hood story from Young (The Emperor and the Kite; Cats Are Cats; Yeh-Shen) features three daughters left at home when their mother goes to visit their grandmother. Lon Po Po, the Granny Wolf, pretends to be the girls' grandmother, until clever Shang, the eldest daughter, suspects the greedy wolf's real identity. Tempting him with ginkgo nuts, the girls pull him in a basket to the top of the tree in which they are hiding, then let go of the rope--killing him. One of Young's most arresting illustrations accompanies his dedication: "To all the wolves of the world for lending their good name as a tangible symbol for our darkness." Like ancient Oriental paintings, the illustrations are frequently grouped in panels. When the girls meet the wolf, e.g., the left panel focuses on their wary faces peering out from the darkness, the middle enlarges the evil wolf's eye and teeth, and the third is a vivid swirl of the blue clothes in which the wolf is disguised. The juxtaposition of abstract and realistic representations, the complicated play of color and shadow, and the depth of the artist's vision all help transform this simple fairy tale into an extraordinary and powerful book. Ages 4-8.

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“A weary grown-up remembers the simple childhood joy of swinging on birch trees and draws complex lessons from the memory. Frost's delightful depiction of rural life is fully evoked in Ed Young's illustrations.”

-Christopher Camuto,

*Audubon Reviews*
- Soft watercolors
- Yellow color
- Impressionistic leaves
- Effect of the light through the leaves
Illustrations on brown paper
Charcoal media gives the effect of cat fur
Uses space creatively—cats sprawl across the page

If . . . .
If you,
Like me,
Were made of fur
And sun warmed you,
Like me,
You’d purr.

Karla Kuskin
- Chinese folktale
- Cut paper creates texture
- Brown-toned collage, pastel and watercolor
- Accordion format
- Chinese calligraphy on the inside
- Bright and cheerful colors
Ages 4-7. In this retelling of a Chinese folktale (which is told by many cultures), a marriageable young mouse waits as her doting parents decide who will be the perfect husband for her. Papa mouse seeks out the powerful sun but learns that the sun is helpless when covered by a cloud. Scurrying off to talk with the cloud, Papa mouse hears that the wind can blow away clouds. Pursuing the wind, Papa mouse learns that the mountain is even more powerful, because a mountain stops the wind. Meeting the mountain, Papa mouse hears that even the mighty mountain must crumble in time, because of the many holes dug into him by mice. Since mice are so powerful, Papa picks a handsome young mouse for his delighted daughter to marry. The book closes with the moral that to find an answer, one must not only look but also see. There's a lot to be seen in the artwork illustrating this well-told story. To begin with, there's the meticulously designed and unusual format. After one unties the raffia ribbons holding the boards shut, the book folds out, accordion-like, in one long continuous page of heavy paper, attached to the binding only along the front edge. This folding screen of scenes turns ordinary pages into a series of spreads, or it unfolds into one long, connected picture of the narrative. Using cut papers with watercolor and pastels, the collage artwork features beautifully drawn mice silhouetted against expressionistic backgrounds. The entire back side of the page displays a series of Chinese characters, telling the story in beautiful calligraphy written in white on a black background. More beautiful when seen from a distance, this unusual picture book will be equally effective for reading aloud or for displaying in a long, horizontal space that will allow children to "reread" the story for themselves, through the illustrations. --Carolyn Phelan
(Booklist/October 15, 1997)
- Caldecott Honor book
- Based on classic Indian tale
- Cut-paper collage technique
The Indian fable of the *blind* men exploring different parts of an elephant and ultimately determining the truth about the whole animal comes alive for a new generation of readers. Young's decision to turn the *blind* men into *mice* gives the story great appeal for young children. Each mouse visits the elephant on succeeding days of the week, declaring that he has discovered a pillar, a snake, a cliff, a spear, a fan, or a rope. But a seventh mouse, the only one to investigate the whole "something," is able to discern that though it is "as sturdy as a pillar, supple as a snake, wide as a cliff, sharp as a spear, breezy as a fan, stringy as a rope," altogether, it is an elephant. Young concludes, in true fable style, with a moral: "Knowing in part may make a fine tale, but wisdom comes from seeing the whole." His retelling is brief, concise, and to the point. The spareness of the text is echoed in the splendid collages, where the brightly colored *mice* cavort against black backgrounds. Young plays with the concept of size as he contrasts the minuteness of the *mice* with the grandiosity of the elephant. The artwork depicting the elephant is striking; glorious chunks of textured paper are used to simulate the animal's hide. An immensely appealing package.
- Chinese folktale
- Influence of Chinese painting is evident
- Words complement the story
- Whimsical illustrations
Works Cited


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