

Orca Book Publishers

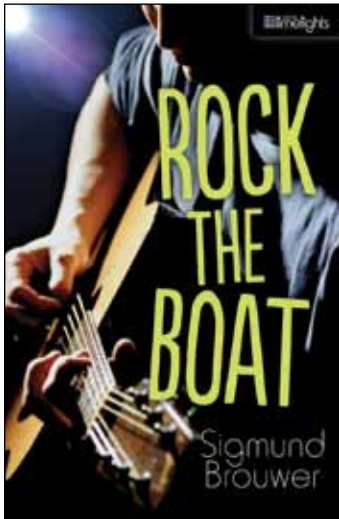
Rights Catalogue—Limelights



ORCA BOOK PUBLISHERS
Reaching More Readers

Transatlantic Agency

Amy Tompkins
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World Rights Available
(ex – North America)
128 pages · ages 11–14

Rock the Boat

Sigmund Brouwer

Webb didn't come to Nashville to get ripped off.

Webb believes that if you want to reach your dreams, you have to live life loud. Bring the roof down. Rock the boat. Make sure that when you look back, you have no regrets. But when a shady music producer steals one of Webb's songs, Webb finds out how hard it is for a kid on his own in Nashville to get justice. With the help of an unlikely ally, Webb discovers that he has what it takes to succeed: talent, determination and some good friends.

"Brouwer keeps both chapters and book as short as possible; despite this, his characters shine as individuals, and clearly he has done his research on the dangers the music world poses for new talent...A quick read for music lovers." —*Kirkus Reviews*

"A quick, easy and compelling narrative appealing to both genders. Although it is aimed at eleven to fourteen-year-olds, the simple vocabulary, short sentences and brief chapters make it accessible to much younger readers." —*Resource Links*

"Will hook readers from the first chapter...True to life and easy to grasp...A suspenseful plot, fascinating details, and a likable protagonist make this title a wonderful addition to hi-lo collections." —*School Library Journal*



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Billboard Express

Sigmund Brouwer & Cindy Morgan

Elle already has what it takes to be a star. So why does everyone want her to change?

Elle has come to Nashville to become a star. She has what it takes, but her agent and all the label executives want to change everything about her—her hair, her body, her clothes and, most important, her music. So Elle becomes a blond, sings about cookin' for her man and wears tiny shorts and revealing tank tops. Then a chance meeting with an established female songwriter makes Elle realize that she's paying too high a price for success.

Billboard Express continues the story that began in Rock the Boat by Sigmund Brouwer.

"Morgan and Brouwer paint an accurate portrait of the Nashville star-making machinery and the constant tug of war between art and commerce. It's deliciously entertaining, but most of all Elle's bravery is inspiring. After all...don't we all want to be true to ourselves and live authentic lives? This book will remind you why that's so valuable." —Deborah Evans Price, *Billboard* contributing writer and CMA Media Achievement Award winner



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Breaking Big

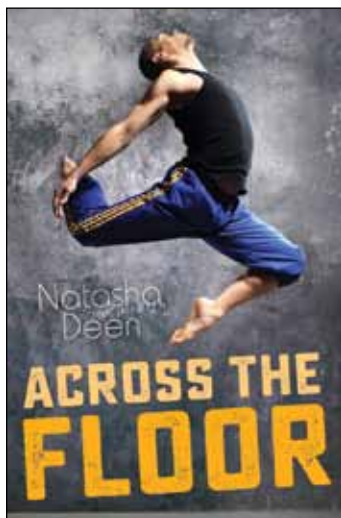
Penny Draper

Will one more prank be one too many?

Robin's got everything it takes to be a principal dancer: the body, the feet, the strength and the passion. But his devil-may-care attitude plays havoc with discipline at the Premier Dance School. One more prank may be one too many. That's why everyone is shocked when he's the only student dancer picked to understudy with the company, even though the choice makes sense—Robin is cast as Puck, the annoying trickster fairy in *A Midsummer's Night Dream*. Shock turns to horror when the principal dancer is injured and Robin has to perform instead. The other dancers don't think he can pull it off, and even Robin wonders if it's too much too soon.

Will his big break kill his career before it even starts?

“It is refreshing to see this story told from a male dancer's perspective, and Robin's narrative style, arrogant and vulnerable by turn, aptly reflects the angst and self-doubt of a teenager who realizes that obtaining his heart's desire means that he now has something to lose... While Robin is the novel's protagonist, ballet itself is undeniably the story's main character. Contextual usage of ballet terminology and vivid description of movement bring the physicality and fluidity of dance to life, making this novel both a love letter and useful introduction to the art form.” —*Kirkus Reviews*

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Across the Floor

Natasha Deen

Can a brand-new pursuit take the place of a lifelong passion?

Luc Waldon always figured he knew what his passion was: football. He lives it, he breathes it—and he thinks he has what it takes to go all the way to the NFL. So when his football coach orders him to sign up for contemporary-dance classes to improve his game, Luc's less than thrilled. When he realizes that dance might actually be his true passion, he faces a tough decision. Is he willing to leave behind the field and a real shot at professional sports, and disappoint his parents, his coach and his teammates, in order to pursue a new dream?

Canadian Children's Book Centre Best Books starred selection

“Deen is clearly in her element writing about dance, and every leg extension and muscle strain feels achingly authentic, as does Luc's initial cluelessness, providing readers with an excellent introduction to dance terminology... racial and sexual diversity is seamlessly integrated into the text... sure to satisfy beginners and seasoned dancers longing to relive those first steps that made them love the craft.” —*Kirkus Reviews*



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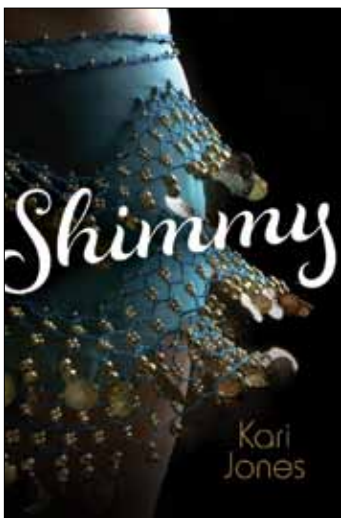
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Shimmy

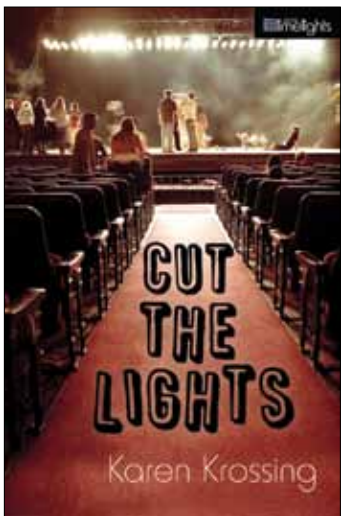
Kari Jones

Lila has been given a chance to pursue her dream—but is it worth the cost?

Lila has always wanted a career in belly dance, so she is thrilled when she is invited to join Dana Sajala’s competitive and prestigious studio. But dancing at the new studio isn’t quite what she expected. Dana Sajala is a tough teacher, and Lila finds the constant criticism stressful. On top of that, Lila misses the dancers from her old troupe, and a rift is developing between her and her best friend, Angela, who is not altogether sympathetic to Lila’s struggles. Lila has always loved belly dance—the music, the costumes, the choreography—but when she realizes that none of it is as much fun as it used to be, she starts to question whether she has made the right choice.

Canadian Children’s Book Centre Best Books selection

“The central themes of this novel are fantastic and not often explored seriously in teen fiction. How important is it for creative teens to be completely wedded to their art form...*Shimmy* shows readers the worth in building a community and supporting your peers.” —*CM Magazine*



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Cut the Lights

Karen Krossing

Is the play cursed or is Briar just a lousy director?

Briar has a vision for the one-act play she’s been chosen to direct at her high school. She’s going to create a masterpiece. If only everyone involved in the production shared her vision. Her leading lady is gifted but troubled, her leading man has a crush on the leading lady, her stage manager doesn’t have a clue, and her best friend, who wrote the play, is worried that Briar’s production is cursed. As Briar struggles to motivate her cast and crew, she learns some important truths about the fine art of directing.

“This entry into the Limelights line is one of [Orca’s] finest offerings...Krossing has done her research, filling her story with specifics...that any young thespian will recognize. A ticking clock...lends a level of tension greater than that of many books with higher stakes.” —*Booklist*, starred review

“A fast-paced read...*Cut the Lights* builds to a satisfying conclusion and will appeal not only to budding performers, but also to any teen who has ever felt misunderstood.” —National Reading Campaign blog



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Strings Attached

Diane Dakers

Is being successful worth losing a friend?

Brielle and Tawni have played cello side by side in orchestras since they were nine years old. Brielle has always played second chair to Tawni's first, and she's been happy with that arrangement.

When Tawni is injured, Brielle suddenly finds herself principal cellist. Not only does that mean she'll be thrust into the spotlight, but it also means she is now leader of the cello section. Brielle is terrified. Is she good enough? Will the other musicians accept her? What if she screws up?

Despite her fears, Brielle rises to the occasion. Her cello skills, and her leadership skills, improve as she grows into her new role. But just as Brielle is beginning to feel confident, Tawni returns. And she wants her job back. If Brielle steps down now, she'll lose her place in the spotlight. If she doesn't, her friendship could be in jeopardy.

Diane Dakers has worked as a print and broadcast journalist since 1991, specializing in arts reporting and science journalism. She has three novels with Orca, *Bad Business*, *Homecoming* and *Strings Attached*. Diane lives in Victoria, British Columbia. For more information, visit www.dianedakers.com.

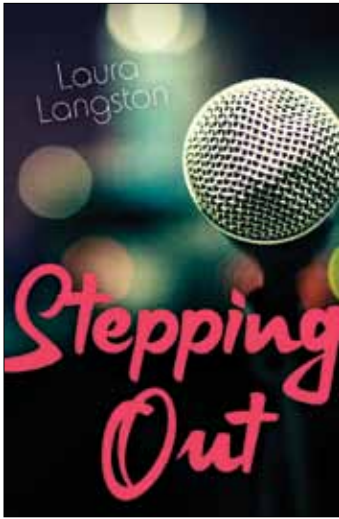
"Diane Dakers has created an interesting story about orchestra life while also effectively portraying the difficulties of high school through believable characters, realistic dialogue and engaging descriptions of music, from classical to contemporary...Reluctant readers interested in music and performance will especially appreciate the easy pace and music focused storyline of *Strings Attached*. Recommended." —*CM Magazine*



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Stepping Out

Laura Langston

Succeeding in stand-up comedy is no laughing matter.

Laughter is fifteen-year-old Paige Larsson's currency in life. It takes the sting out of life's tough stuff. It eases the pain of nasty comments, agonizing moments in gym class and awkward pauses at parties. She likes it even more when others laugh with her, so she's become a YouTube comedy vlogger.

Now Paige is about to step out of her comfort zone and compete—live and onstage—in the prestigious International Teens in Comedy festival. Winning will give her the opportunity to work with some of the biggest names in comedy. It'll also mean \$10,000 for her school's performing-arts department. But Paige has always used her humor to mask the pain of a disability, and in the world of stand-up comedy, that won't cut it anymore.

Canadian Children's Book Centre Best Books selection

"This entertaining and inspiring story will appeal to anyone who feels like they don't fit in. Paige is a genuinely funny character and a winner that readers will root for." —*Booklist*

"Langston takes the reader realistically through every nerve-wracking step: in the hotel, backstage, and through three performances at the mic." —*VOYA*



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Hot New Thing

Laura Langston

Fame comes with a hefty price tag

Lily is discovered by a big-name director when she's auditioning for a role in a tooth-paste commercial. He wants her for his new movie, which is great except for the fact that it's shooting in Los Angeles and Lily lives in Vancouver. With the help of her Chinese grandmother, she convinces her parents to let her go to LA with her agent as a chaperone. But when she gets there, she finds out that if she wants to be more than the flavor of the week, she's going to have to pay a price that may be way too high.

Canadian Children's Book Centre Best Books starred selection

"In Lily, Langston has created an authentic, lively character with whom readers will be able to relate. The realistic portrayal of the acting scenes also adds tension and depth to the story." —*CM Magazine*

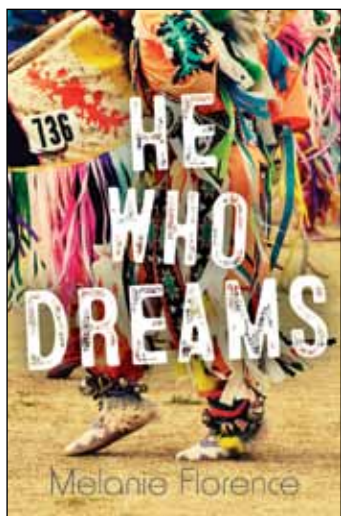
"Lily is a likeable character and readers will enjoy this story of her freshness...Readers who are interested in acting or the dream of a career in the arts will enjoy this story." —*Resource Links*



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He Who Dreams

Melanie Florence

The sound of drumbeats changes everything.

Juggling soccer, school, friends and family leaves John with little time for anything else. But one day at the local community center, following the sound of drums, he stumbles into an Indigenous dance class. Before he knows what's happening, John finds himself stumbling through beginner classes with a bunch of little girls, skipping soccer practice and letting his other responsibilities slide. When he attends a pow wow and witnesses a powerful performance, he realizes that he wants to be a dancer more than anything. But the nearest class for boys is at the Native Cultural Center in the city, and he still hasn't told his family or friends about his new passion. If he wants to dance, he will have to stop hiding. Between the mocking of his teammates and the hostility of the boys in his dance class, John must find a way to balance and embrace both the Irish and Cree sides of his heritage.

Melanie Florence is a writer of Cree and Scottish heritage based in Toronto. She was close to her grandfather as a child, a relationship that sparked her interest in writing about Indigenous themes and characters. She is the author of *Missing Nimama*, which won the 2016 TD Canadian Children's Literature Award and is a Forest of Reading Golden Oak Finalist. Her other books include *Righting Canada's Wrongs: Residential Schools* and the teen novels *He Who Dreams*, *The Missing*, *One Night*, and *Rez Runaway*. For more information, visit www.melanieflorence.com.

"Florence effortlessly creates a very real and loving biracial family for her thoroughly modern protagonist. John's fast-paced tale twines universal teen concerns with specific cultural issues. This novel allows young readers to embrace their own heritages and realize they stand on the shoulders of all their ancestors." —*Kirkus Reviews*

"The author...reinforces that she is capable of writing engaging stories about Indigenous subjects in any genre...John is an appealing character...Scenes between him and his parents and energetic younger sister, Jen, are especially well drawn...*He Who Dreams* offers readers a fast-paced story with realistic Indigenous content connecting the book to contemporary discussions about Indigenous issues in Canada." —*Quill & Quire*

"*He Who Dreams* is a breathtaking read for anyone who enjoys dance, drumming, pow wows, and traditional aboriginal attire. Enjoy!" —*Ottawa Public Library - Staff Blog*

"Melanie Florence manages...to portray a realistic portrait of a young man trying to figure out what motivates him and where he wants to go while giving his story room to tell itself rather than trying to direct from the keyboard. Well done." —*Resource Links*



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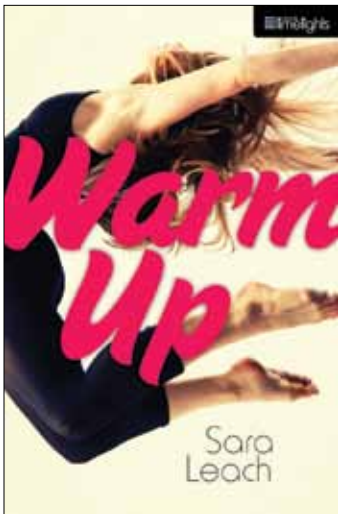
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Warm Up

Sara Leach

Without passion, dance is just a bunch of steps.

Jasmine used to love dance. Now she struggles to hold on to that love as her dance team trains for a big competition. Her teammates are bickering, and when their teacher suggests that Jasmine might not have what it takes to be on the team, Jasmine is ready to quit. At a particularly rough practice, she channels her anger into her moves, surprising everyone, including herself, with how well she dances. But the team is still falling apart, and it's up to Jasmine to figure out a way to get her teammates to work together and celebrate the joy of dance

Sara Leach is a writer and teacher-librarian in Whistler, British Columbia. She loves hiking the nearby alpine trails with her husband and two children. Fortunately, they have never been stranded in any mountain huts, although they have endured many rainy days. For more information, visit www.saraleach.com.

Canadian Children's Book Centre Best Books selection

"Leach provides a compelling story of emotional growth while giving readers an authentic view of contemporary dance and competition...The smooth, graceful writing matches the subject nicely...As with most books from this publisher, its brevity never takes away from good storytelling." —*Booklist*



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Off Pointe

Leanne Lieberman

Camp Dance is all about taking the types of risks Meg has spent her life avoiding.

When Meg's summer ballet program is canceled and her ballet teacher suggests she attend Camp Dance to learn new dance styles, Meg is devastated. Worse still, her teacher thinks she lacks stage presence and needs to connect more with her audience. At camp, Meg struggles to learn contemporary dance. A girl named Logan, who is jealous of Meg's ballet technique and her friendship with Nio, a cute contemporary dancer, makes Meg's life even more difficult. When Meg, Nio and Logan have to work together to create a piece for the final show, arguments threaten to ruin their dance. Unless they are able to overcome their differences, Meg's time at Camp Dance will have been a disaster from start to finish.

Leanne Lieberman is the author of four books for young adults, *Gravity*, *The Book of Trees*, *Lauren Yanofsky Hates the Holocaust* and *Off Pointe*. She lives in Kingston, Ontario, with her husband and two sons. For more information, www.leannelieberman.com.

Canadian Children's Book Centre Best Books selection

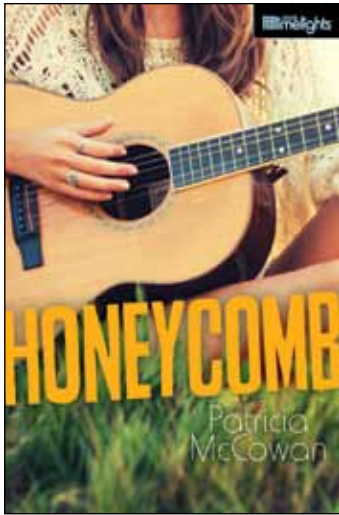
"A quick, easy, realistic read, ideal for reluctant readers interested in dance and a little romance." —*Booklist*

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Honeycomb

Patricia McCowan

How can Nat create harmony when she doesn't trust her own voice?

When Nat, her best friend Jess and singing-star wannabe Harper sing together, their harmonies bring down the house. For Nat, the experience sparks a driving new desire to perform. But when the girls form a trio and enter a contest for a chance to play at the Tall Grass Music Festival, Nat finds that harmony—musical and otherwise—is hard to maintain. Her bandmates almost never agree, her new boyfriend starts behaving more like a non-boyfriend, and the trio's famous-musician mentor doesn't even like the way Nat breathes. Every day, Nat's dream of performing at Tall Grass seems farther away, and she questions whether she has what it takes to get there.

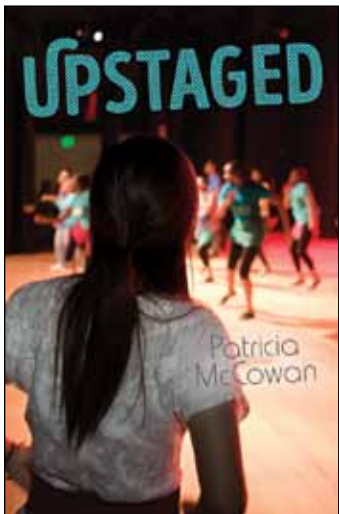
Canadian Children's Book Centre Best Books selection

"Emphasize[s] the necessity of cooperation and persistence, as well as the importance of education and family... Will appeal to reluctant readers, especially those with an interest in the performing arts." —*School Library Journal*

"With minimal adult guidance, the girls learn specific elements of their craft, how to navigate opportunities in the music industry and how to work together, even coming to understand that their arguments are a natural part of the music-making process. A fast-paced narrative set to the tune of talented-teen melodrama." —*Kirkus Reviews*

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Upstaged

Patricia McCowan

It's hard to shine when you're surrounded by stars.

Ellie is used to getting leading roles in her small-town school's musicals, but her place at center stage disappears when her dad becomes the host of a breakfast TV show and they have to move to the big city. When Ellie auditions for—and lands—a spot with the Youth Works Theater Company, she comes up against a tight-knit group of talented, experienced and competitive triple-threat performers. Not only does she not get a lead, but she has to share a role with Marissa, a company veteran who seems determined to do all she can to outshine Ellie. Out of her depth and far from all that she's known, Ellie wonders just what she has to do to stop feeling upstaged by everyone around her.

"[McCowan] presents an accurate account of a theater company, with its off-site, dress, and technical rehearsals, and a convincingly diverse urban cast of secondary characters... A nifty story for theater fans." —*Kirkus Reviews*

"A quick read, and the frequent references to current and classic musical titles will appeal to readers who fancy the limelight for themselves." —*Booklist*

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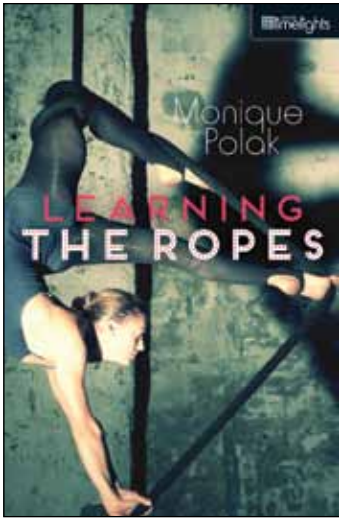
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Learning the Ropes

Monique Polak

You can't make it to the top if you're afraid to fall.

Mandy dreams of a career in the circus, working as an aerialist who specializes in rope climbing. When she is accepted into the prestigious Montreal Circus College summer program, she feels that she is finally on her way to fulfilling her dreams. At circus camp she is befriended—and challenged—by young circus performers from around the world. Circus camp turns out to be a magical combination of work and play, but when a veteran aerialist is killed in a fall, Mandy must confront the reality of circus life.

Learning the Ropes is **Monique Polak**'s seventeenth novel for young adults. Her historical novel *What World is Left* won the 2009 Quebec Writers' Federation Prize for Children's and Young Adult Literature. Monique is also a journalist whose work appears regularly in the *Montreal Gazette* and in Postmedia publications across Canada. She has been teaching English literature and humanities at Marianopolis College in Montreal, Quebec, for thirty years. Monique lives in Montreal with her husband. For more information, visit www.moniquepolak.com.

"An inspirational story...[that] tackles more than perseverance and ambition...[including] female competition, body image, and the pressure of gender expectations for young girls in society... The [Orca Limelights] stories are quick, bite-sized reads, but they pack a punch—the well-developed stories have relatable characters and entertaining plots. This book will appeal to a diverse audience of young female readers." —VOYA

"With her strong dialogue and consistent narrative voice, Monique Polak succeeds in convincing the reader that a fifteen-year-old really is telling the story... Even if the YA reader is not interested in circus arts or gymnastics, this book is still a guaranteed fun read." —*Montreal Review of Books*

"One of a growing number of novellas focused on teens trying to become professional entertainers, and the choice of the circus as its subject certainly pops the book out of the norm. Full of interesting and varied characters, the story stands up well, and the author describes the difficult aerial maneuvers vividly. A quick read with a fascinating focus." —*Kirkus Reviews*

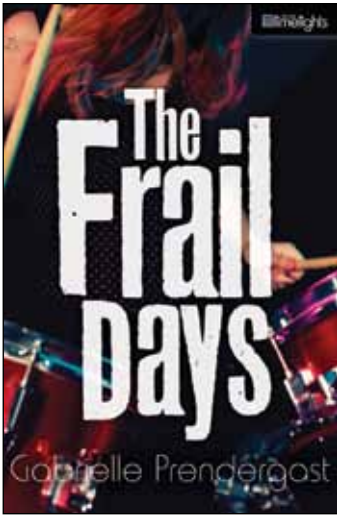
"Will hook readers from the first chapter... True to life and easy to grasp... A suspenseful plot, fascinating details, and a likable protagonist make this title a wonderful addition to hi-lo collections." —*School Library Journal*



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The Frail Days

Gabrielle Prendergast

Stella Wing wants to rock, but everyone else wants to rap.

Sixteen-year-old drummer Stella, guitarist Jacob and bassist Miles need a wild singer for their old-school rock band. When they discover nerdy Tamara Donnelly, who nails the national anthem at a baseball game, Stella is not convinced Tamara's sound is right for the band. Stella wants to turn Tamara into a rock goddess, but Tamara proves to be a confident performer who has her own ideas about music and what it means to be cool. When their band, the Frail Days, starts to build a local following, Stella and Tamara clash over the direction the band should take, forcing them to consider what true musical collaboration means.

“Prendergast displays excellent insight into what makes young artists tick in this short novella. Characterization is deftly done: Stella has an attractively rebellious edge to her personality, and Tamara's character grows naturally in confidence. Punchy, insightful and great for music lovers.”
—*Kirkus Reviews*

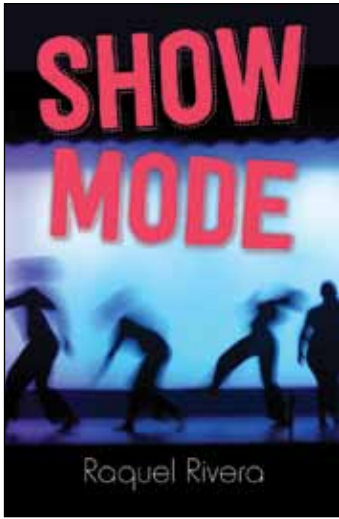
“The dialogue is authentic, and the vocabulary is varied, interesting and appropriate for the intended audience. Characters are realistic, and the plot is believable. The theme of performing and finding a voice is well explored in this novel...*The Frail Days* would appeal to a variety of readers, including readers of music, relationships and realistic fiction. Highly Recommended.”
—*CM Magazine*



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Show Mode

Raquel Rivera

Life isn't perfect, but your outfit can be.

Adina has always wanted to be a part of the annual fashion show at her school for the arts. Now that she's finally in the ninth grade, she and her friends can audition. She knows their act could be perfect. They've got great music, gorgeous costumes and wicked dance moves. But Willow is being her usual flaky self, and Sandra's getting touchy. Maybe even a bit mean. Luckily, Seth remains steady and reliable. Their biggest competition is the annoyingly perfect Prima Donnas, who are doing everything they can to undermine Adina and her friends.

Adina is used to working hard at everything she does, including her violin, art, drama and singing classes. But her friends are getting sick of her ordering them around. They just don't get what a huge deal this is. When one of the Prima Donnas gets injured during their audition, minutes after Sandra storms off in a huff, the two groups realize that in order to succeed, they may have to work together.

"Rivera succeeds in creating real tensions between the youngsters—readers will wonder throughout whether they'll be able to pull it off—and their final act comes together with a surprising twist. Kudos to Rivera, whose dance routine details, in addition to the shimmering gold costumes, make the acts come alive." —*Montreal Review of Books*

"*Show Mode*...is a good read with strong and interesting characters who learn and grow from their mistakes. The quick moving plot keeps the story interesting and gives the reader a realistic glimpse into the world of performing. Recommended. —*CM Magazine*

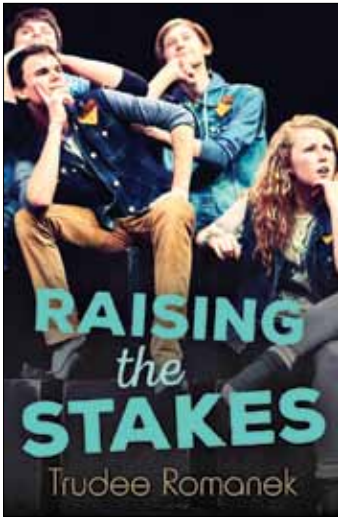
"Many thoughtful themes emerge that will keep students talking: how words can hurt others, bullying, Hindi culture, body image, boys in the arts, co-operation that leads to real friendship. Younger teens interested in the arts will be satisfied by this short, easy to read novel and inspired by the collaboration of Adina and her friends." —*Resource Links*



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Raising the Stakes

Trudee Romanek

*Chloe only wants to help her teammates improve.
So why are they all mad at her?*

It's the start of a new season for Harrington High's improv team—and Chloe is determined that this will be the year they make it all the way to the top. Her teammates (who also happen to be her closest friends) are a talented bunch, and she knows they can do it. They have to. Because getting to nationals is Chloe's best chance to prove—to her parents, to the improv scouts and, most of all, to herself—that she has what it takes to succeed. Chloe is doing everything she can to help her teammates perform better. So why are they all mad at her?

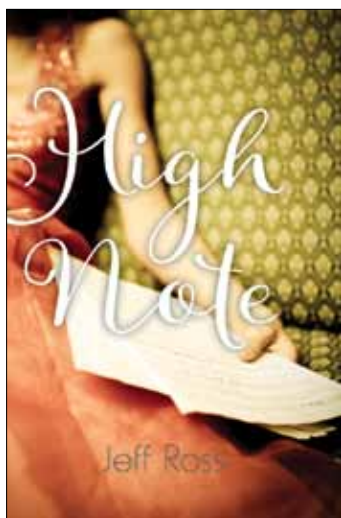
“The flow of this book is very smooth and transitions well between the various characters. Romanek provides great information through the characters on the subject of improv. While the reluctant reader will enjoy this book, it may attract other readers who are interested in this topic and may go the extra step in researching it.” —VOYA



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128 pages · ages 11–14

High Note

Jeff Ross

Is Hailey's own life as dramatic as an opera?

Hailey McEwan has many interests—soccer, field hockey, animation. She'd probably never have started singing if her best friend, Crissy, hadn't persuaded her to take singing lessons and join her choir. No one had any idea that Hailey would be such a natural, least of all Hailey herself. A shared love of music—from pop to opera—has been a big part of the girls' friendship, but when the two face off in a competition for a role in a production of *The Marriage of Figaro*, their closeness turns into a bitter rivalry. Hailey will have to make a tough decision. Is opera as important to her as it is to Crissy? And is landing a role worth losing her best friend?

At Ease

Jeff Ross

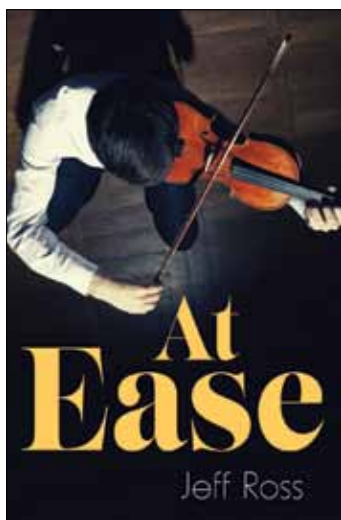
*All Will wants to do is make music.
Too bad an audience is part of the deal.*

At fifteen, Will already knows he wants to spend his life playing classical violin. And when he is invited to take part in a summer program for young musicians, he realizes it is a chance to make his dream a reality. But years of playing only for Mr. Jorgensen, his elderly neighbor and mentor, haven't prepared Will for what will happen when he steps onto the stage. He never expected the self-doubt that takes over his thoughts, or the fear of failure that makes his hands shake and his heart race. What happens when the one thing you need to achieve your dreams is something you find utterly terrifying?

Canadian Children's Book Centre Best Books selection

"This entry in the Orca Limelights series should find an audience with those in the performing arts, especially fans of Sara Zarr's *The Lucy Variations* (2013), Gayle Forman's *If I Stay* (2009), and other tales of musical prodigies." —*Booklist* online

"Insightful and utterly readable...[The] characters are drawn subtly and with a light touch. It makes for a well-coordinated performance." —*Resource Links*



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Big Time

Tom Ryan

Sometimes you have to fail before you can succeed.

Gerri waits outside all night to audition for *Big Time*, her favorite TV singing competition. She believes she has a shot at success, but when she's insulted by one of the judges and kicked out of the competition, she thinks she'll probably never sing again. After a teacher at her school asks her to join a choral club, Gerri reluctantly gets involved. Even though she can't read music and she doesn't know the other kids, she finds herself enjoying the group and learning a lot about music. A cute guy she met at the *Big Time* auditions joins the group, and when they perform their unique mashups at an open-mic night, Gerri realizes there's more than one way to be a successful—and happy—singer!

Junior Library Guild selection

Canadian Children's Book Centre Best Books selection

"Readers will want to ride along for the high hopes and disappointments, as well as the self-discovery that is part of Gerri's journey to embrace and polish her talent." —*Publishers Weekly*

"A feel-good story that is all about a love of music and following one's dreams." —*CM Magazine*

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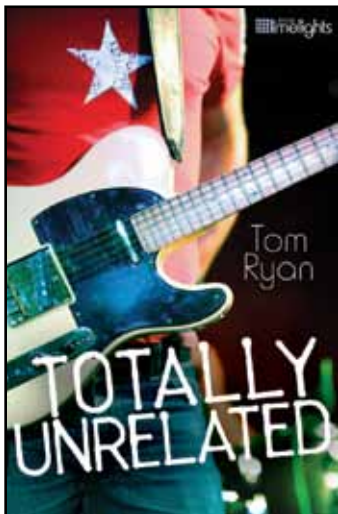
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Totally Unrelated

Tom Ryan

When you step into the spotlight, you have to expect some heat.

Neil plays guitar with his family's band, the Family McClintock, even though he can't stand the Celtic music they play, he doesn't dance, he hates the outfits, and every single performance reminds him that he isn't as talented as the rest of the family. When his buddy Bert convinces him to form a rock band and enter a local talent show, Neil's playing improves and everyone notices. He starts to think that all those years of practice might come in handy after all. But it all comes to a head when Neil has to choose between an important gig with the family band and the talent show. He's only sure of one thing: whatever he decides to do, he's going to be letting someone down..

Junior Library Guild selection

Canadian Children's Book Centre Best Books selection

Hackmatack Children's Choice Award nominee

"Ryan writes well, and there's a positive underlying message about following your own path while honouring other responsibilities and commitments." —*Quill & Quire*

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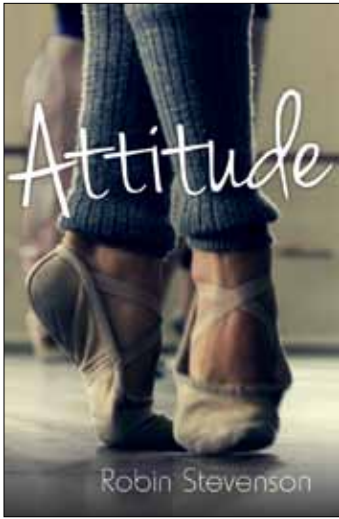
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Attitude

Robin Stevenson

There's more to ballet than pink pointe shoes and tutus.

When Cassie comes to Vancouver from Australia for an intensive summer program at a prestigious ballet school, she finds it hard to fit in. A clique of girls who have been at the school a long time don't want the newcomers to get any attention. At first Cassie tries to go along to get along, but when she realizes that some of the visiting summer students are being bullied and threatened, and that she herself is being sabotaged, she finally speaks out—and finds out how far some girls will go to succeed.

Robin Stevenson is the author of multiple books for children and teens. She spends most of her time writing, hanging out with her homeschooled son, and teaching creative writing to adults, teens and kids. She lives in Victoria, British Columbia, with her family. For more information, visit www.robinstevenson.com. Robin loves to hear from readers—and she always writes back.

Canadian Children's Book Centre Best Books selection

Forcing the Ace

Erin Thomas

Sometimes the real magic happens offstage.

Alex wants to enter the Silver Stage magic competition, but he needs a sponsor. Jack, a veteran card wizard, is willing to take on the role, but only if Alex agrees to team up with Zoe, another young magician—and Alex's rival. Working with Jack and sharing the spotlight with Zoe, Alex comes to see that there are other ways to be a magician besides competing—and that magic is about entertaining people, not fooling them.

Erin Thomas is the author of several books for children and teens. She lives in Whitby, Ontario, with her husband, their daughter, a small gray cat and a large black dog. For more information, visit www.erinthomas.ca.

"Short sentences and chapters make this perfect for reluctant readers. Within that format, the author is able to create interesting characters and a convincing story. Eventually, Alex comes full circle, learning that performing magic is a way to bring joy to others rather than performing for the sake of winning. This book is a perfect addition to libraries needing hi/lo titles."
—*Library Media Connection*



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