



Big Little Book Awardee . Illustrator . 2017

PROITI ROY

Proiti Roy's illustrations are evocative and sensitive with attention to texture, color, form and movement. Even a banal story-line is lifted by the freshness and vivacity of her illustrations, which use a wide range of styles to suit different story lines. Her work is carefully researched—with meticulous attention given to the places, people and cultures she writes about. At the same time, this deep cultural sensitivity and understanding is held lightly, such that it does not weigh down its young readers. She is able to enter the world of children softly, so that they do not notice her presence in their midst, and yet, she is there in every frame, guiding their attention to the world depicted in the story.

There are delightful flights of fancy in her illustrations in *Unhappy Moon* and *Mendak Ka Taron Bhara Sapna*, along with a sense of freedom. She sets the mood with excellent use of colours in most of her books. For example, subtle greens whites and beiges recreate the fresh ambience of places where bamboo grows in abundance in *Bulbuli's Bamboo*. The fascinating text of *Paanch Khambo wala Gaon* is complemented by equally fascinating illustrations of characters who strangely look like the poles they climb—long, narrow and constricted in form themselves. She also has a knack for representing interesting, unusual angles and perspectives in her work. The bold colours and patterns of *The Enchanted Saarang* are based on

traditional embroidery patterns used in Kashmir, where the stories are set. There is growth in her style over time, especially in terms of her ability to lift the illustrations beyond the text. What has persisted from her earliest works to the most recent, is a sense of introspection, an inward journey – that appears to be as much for the artist, as it is for the child-reader. Through her culturally engaging and seemingly effortless illustrations, Proiti Roy continues to build a body of work that contributes richly to Indian children's literature and gives readers something new to discover and enjoy every time.

