FOREWORD REVIEWS THE INDIE WE LOVE.

Picture Books

El Hombre que Hizo el Pueblo Bailar
Candice Stanford
Clear Light Publishers
978-1-57416-050-5
(April 30, 2000)

“Jose had a dream. In his dream, he saw brightly colored costumes swirling around, and he heard laughing and tapping shoes. Everyone was dancing.” Jose danced anywhere and everywhere he could, at schools, senior centers, and universities. At first people laughed at him, mocking him and calling him names. They thought his dream was silly. Jose continued his dancing and began to include native, traditional dances in every performance or lesson he gave. He hoped that his village would realize how simple and enjoyable it was to dance the traditional dances of their culture. Soon, “The people were beginning to see that these dances really were easy and fun. More and more people wanted to learn the dances.” Contagious, traditional folk dances of Mexico spread throughout all of New Mexico, not just the village of Jose Tena.

With full-page, exciting, brightly colored illustrations, this book tells a true story. Using vivid colors and shading, the illustrator shows the “rich heritage in grace, style and costume.” The author, a reporter, freelance writer, and photographer for newspapers and magazines, developed the idea for this book after conducting an interview with the real Jose Tena. With this story, Stanford clearly depicts “the diverse culture of Mexico added with the colonial influences of France and Spain.” It is clear that the translator succeeded in keeping the integrity of the story parallel in English and Spanish.

The book is divided into three sections. The first two sections tell “A True Story” about “The Real Jose Tena.” The third section includes the sheet music and diagrammed dance steps for La Indita (The Little Indian), El Vals de los PaÃ±os (The Waltz of the Handkerchiefs), El Vaquero (The Cowboy), and Las Cuadrillas (Cuadrilla-Part One).

This is a story about dreams, passions, cultural traditions, and persistence. Parents and teachers will be able to share and enjoy this story as an example about cultural diversity, or about traditions and how they are passed down, or about living one’s dreams and passions through persistence and perseverance. The Man Who Set the Town Dancing is an excellent

source and instrument for teachers and families.