FOREWORD REVIEWS THE INDIE WE LOVE.

Picture Books

Sky Castle
Sandra Hanken
Jody Bergsma, illustrator
Illumination Arts Publishing
978-0-935699-14-2
(August 31, 1998)

Positive and encouraging, this is the first book by author and child protection social worker Hanken. She wrote this winsome poem to encourage children to believe in themselves and in the power of their dreams. Handsome pictures perfectly complement the poetic images. Gorgeous illustrations of butterflies and dragonflies, moonbeams and starlight, dolphins and turtles, Pegasus and elves, tigers and owls, dragons and castles stimulate the imagination and rouse warm feelings. Intriguing Celtic borders decorate each page adding an enchanting touch. It's no wonder that illustrator Bergsma is internationally acclaimed. Her other book, Dreambirds, won the 1998 Visionary Award for Best Children's Book.

This line gives an indication of the message of this title:"Let's build a great castle high up in the sky./ We'll close our eyes and let ourselves fly/To a bright new world of our own creation,
/Full of hopes and dreams and imagination."

Children are urged throughout this book to work together, "each adding our part," to create a castle large enough to hold even oceans and forests, deserts and mountains, all the right homes for all of Earth's creatures. They are encouraged to bring warm hugs and smiles; love and laughter, welcoming relatives and new friends from many lands to join as one family dancing and singing together.

Sky Castle is a particularly sensitive book fostering a broad sense of appreciation and the value of responsibility in creating a loving world filled with hope. Delightful.

Sophia Tarila