FOREWORD REVIEWS THE INDIE WE LOVE.

Picture Books

Swing Around the Sun
Barbara Juster Esbensen
Cheng-Khee Chee, illustrator
Janice Lee Porter, illustrator
Mary GrandPre, illustrator
Stephen Gammell, illustrator
Lerner Publishing Group
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Children's books about the seasons abound, but this one has stood the test of time. Originally published in 1965, it stuns the reader in this new and revised edition with page after page of amazing artwork. Brilliant pastels and emotionally evocative watercolors, the artwork of four critically acclaimed artists, combined with the already lyrical poetry, make Swing Around the Sun a delight to behold and read.

The book is divided into sections for each of the four seasons, with five poems for each season. Each artist has not only matched the tone of the poetry, but has also visually communicated the visceral experience of fall, winter, spring, and summer. Spring is gray skies with daubs of brilliant color here and there on umbrellas and robin breasts in the muted watercolors of Chee, who also illustrated Old Turtle. Heat and warmth radiate off the page in Porter's summer pastels. GrandPré, the now-famous illustrator of the Harry Potter series, creates a magical autumn of ghosts, fairies, and windy, starlit nights. The glitter of frost and snow falling is perfectly portrayed by Gammell, the Caldecott winning illustrator of the Song and Dance Man and The Relatives Came.

Like the poet, all four illustrators are natives of Minnesota and acknowledged greats in the world of children's literature. Esbensen's poetry speaks to the experience of children, not over nor under them, but directly into their ears. She writes of empty fall gardens, geese returning, fireworks and snow clowns … themes that are central to childhood. Her poetry is neither simplistic nor overly grand; her imagery and the rhythm of her language are both intelligible to young children, as well as instructive. They teach the ways in which poetry can be

simple and beautiful and accessible to all.

The language and art of Swing Around the Sun express the magic of the turning year for both children and adults.