

Qin Wenjun's Dossier

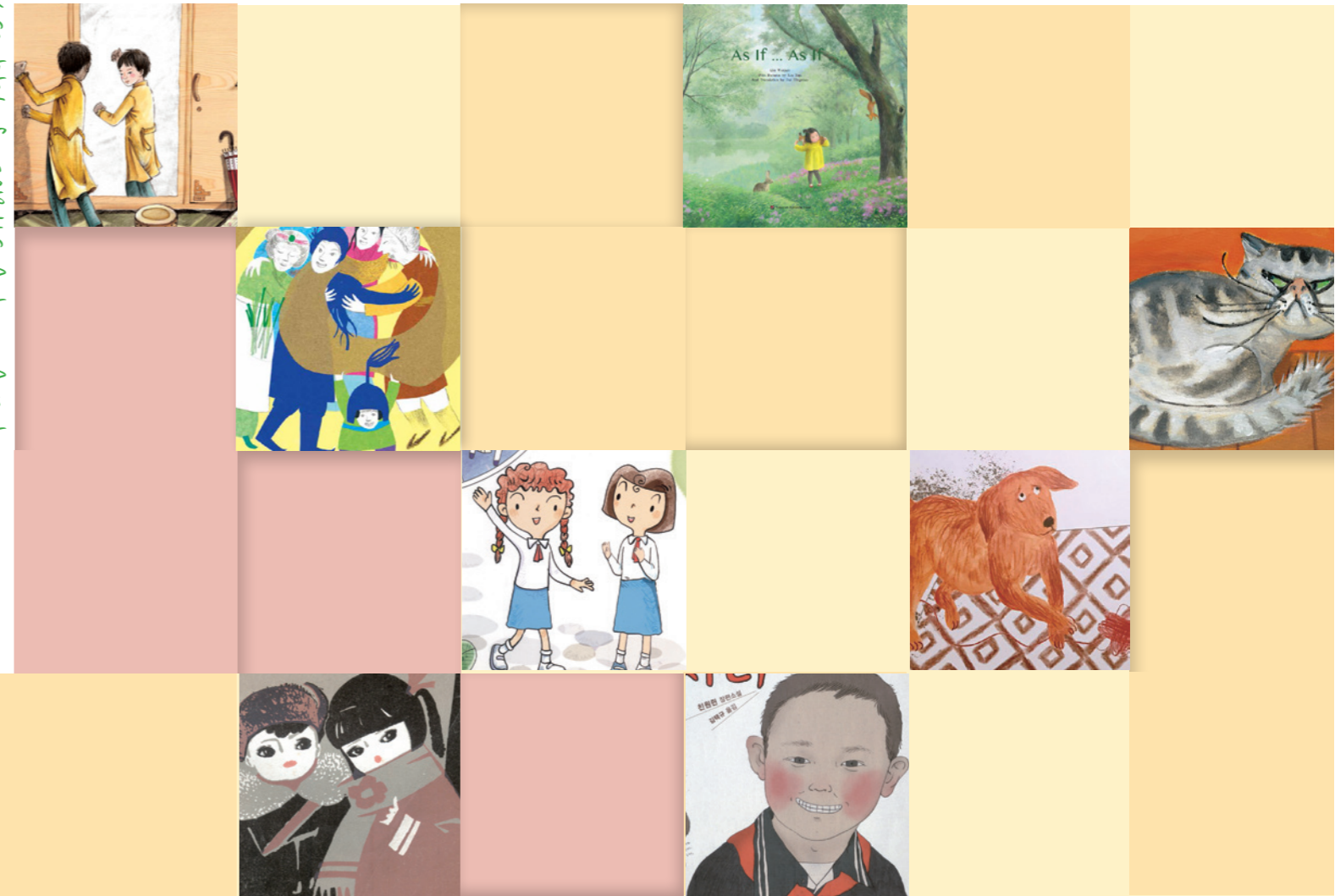
Qin Wenjun's Dossier

We can and must rediscover and revitalize beauty, human nature, warm-heartedness, and magical imagination in and through children's literature. This is my mission, the mission of literature for children, and the mission of humanity.

— Qin Wenjun

CBBY Candidate for 2018 H.C. Anderson Award

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Biographical Information



*Qin Wenjun's authorial philosophy:
we can and must rediscover and revitalize beauty,
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This is her mission,
the mission of literature for children,
and the mission of humanity.*

Qin Wenjun was born in Shanghai in 1954 and grew up in an old apartment building with dozens of neighbors. The many children who lived there formed their own small, colorful world. Each child had his or her own secrets of growing up. Because that world remains so strong in her memory, Qin Wenjun has written a multitude of books that retain the sensibilities of children, such as ***Aroma's Little Garden***.

Qin's parents loved literature. Her mother treated books as treasures; she would wash her hands before reading and would not fold the pages. For her, reading was a sacred activity.

When Qin was 8 years old, she suffered from whooping cough. The doctor of traditional Chinese medicine advised that she stay home indoors for three months. During the daytime, books were her only companions. After recovering from her illness, the child continued to love fiction. Of course, she also continued to love the real world!

When Qin Wenjun was 12 years old, the Cultural Revolution broke out in China. Her father was the dedicated and respected Managing Director of China's largest bicycle factory. Because he refused to commit acts that violated human dignity during those tumultuous times, he was discharged from his position and forced to clean a filthy public toilet. Distraught, he almost committed suicide. Her uncle was imprisoned when accused of counterrevolutionary activity because he was a senior banker during the regime of Chiang Kai-shek. Naturally, these were heavy blows to Qin's childhood, leading her even more to seek light and hope through books. However, during the Cultural Revolution, nearly all good books were banned. Those books her mother had lovingly collected were classified as "poisonous weeds", confiscated and burned. Bookstores and libraries could only offer books deemed as "revolutionary." Thus, Qin had to surreptitiously borrow good books from her neighbors, friends, or classmates, actions that could incur severe punishment. The lenders had to cover the books with newspaper to bring them to the knowledge-hungry girl.

Qin Wenjun deeply loved the big world she found in these books, their sincerity, romanticism, and poetry. When she read one especially suited to her spiritual needs, she would copy her favorite sentences before returning it, using crumpled pulp-based handmade paper that retained the fragrance of the wood. She believed the paper was occupied by the souls of trees and that it had absorbed the essence of heaven and earth. To copy the words she loved onto this kind of paper was fantastic beyond description.

With her father and uncle undergoing persecution, Qin Wenjun was herself labeled as part of a "reactionary family." When she was 17, she was ordered to go 3,300 kilometers from her Shanghai home to the Greater Khingan Range in the far north province of Heilongjiang, there to work as a lumberjack. The enforced journey took four days and three nights on an old green train; it was the first long journey she'd ever taken. Thin and small, weighing only 38 kilograms, she was unaccustomed to the frigid climate of her new residence and suffered from edema. When the icy wind blew into the rough tent she lived in, the temperature inside plummeted to -40 degrees Celsius. The locals said that a person's nose could fall off in such cold weather; that didn't happen to her, but she had to keep moving through the nights to prevent frostbite. Only through thinking and reading did she gather the strength to survive in her new reality.

As the severe winter passed, she unexpectedly found that political prejudice and turmoil were less extreme in the remoteness of the Greater Khingan Range. There in the forest, the natural world was quiet, and she began to appreciate the aboriginal people, the lowbush blueberries, the animals, and mountain streams, comparable in some ways to the idyllic world Henry David Thoreau described in *Walden*.

In the isolated, thickly-forested mountains, transportation was minimal. The young woman could not get news from broadcasts. Power outages were common, and the newspaper arrived only every other week. Still, family and friends sent books to Qin Wenjun. When she'd finished them, she sent them back with detailed letters recording her personal life. Almost all the time, she was alone in the forest, encountering dangers like a bear at the bottom of a hill only ten meters away from her. Qin, almost petrified, held her breath. Fortunately, the wind blew her scent in the direction away from the carnivore. Later, an old Oroqen man whose family had for generations lived in the woods told her that if the wind had been blowing from her to the bear, it could have smelled "scent of humanity" from as far as 100 meters away. The idea of "scent of humanity" remained imprinted on Qin's memory. She incorporated such a concept into some of her novels as a most distinctive, complicated, subtle, and mysterious feature of human beings.

Qin Wenjun also wrote about local customs, for example noting how young people there maintained happy, romantic attitudes despite their lack of material possessions. One of her friends was the granddaughter of a Soviet citizen. The girl took Qin to an "underground concert" where music from around the world was played despite the Chinese government's opposition. The musicians even organized a group of girls to perform quartets and sing beautiful Soviet songs such as *Moscow Night*, a risky activity because China-USSR relations at that time were strained and only approved "revolutionary songs" were supposed to be played and heard. But the Greater Khingan Range was close to the border between the two countries and people of many different ethnicities lived there. They pursued and admired their respective arts and longed for cultural communication. The folk customs remained inclusive so that people of different backgrounds and political convictions could still express mutual understanding and respect. Qin Wenjun had been forced to leave the big city she grew up all along in to labor in unfamiliar surroundings; what she discovered there was a more open society than she had been forced to leave behind, meeting wonderful, complicated people and forming her unique awareness of the real world.

Everyone reading Qin Wenjun's letters praised her. She'd been sent to a bitterly cold place and had to write by the light of a lamp, a small oil lamp with a tinted glass chimney, but between the lines in the letters she wrote over eight years readers could feel her fascination with her new home. Reading her letters was like reading a novel, and, indeed, they were the start of her writing career. Literature became and has remained the most valuable thing in her life; it seemed to permeate her blood. In the 35 years that have followed this formative experience, she has penned more than 80 outstanding books.



By the time Qin Wenjun was 20 years old, many people there had been moved by her passion for literature and recommended that she teach in the local primary school. In her initial year, she had 50 first-time students of the Han, Manchu, Mongolian, and Evenki ethnicities, all of them from the remote, forested mountains. At the first class, Wenjun asked them to turn to page one, but they had no idea what "page one" meant for they had never read a book before. But these innocent children had been born to be sensitive to the beauty in colors, flowers, human emotion, and in stories. Each child was an "irreplaceable miracle."



She taught at the school for five years, inspiring all the children with her love of literature. The children's hearts were opened to books, and the youngsters' natural lovingness warmed Qin Wenjun. She began to review her own childhood, and gradually that childlike innocence returned to her despite her more recent history.

Finally, the Cultural Revolution ended. Qin's father and uncle received political rehabilitation and returned to their former positions. And finally Qin Wenjun, now 25 years old, returned to her hometown of Shanghai. With her she brought the diaries she had kept, written by the lamp's light, and the many letters she'd not been able to send. By this time, she had gained much experience and had resolved upon a mission.

A year later, Wenjun began studying at a university. One day, as she passed a primary school she heard its bell ringing. Immediately she thought of the day she had left Heilongjiang. Her little students had run after her train, hating to part with her. She had kindled in them a love for reading and writing. On that very night, she wrote about a child she remembered, creating her first story, ***Sweet Jujubes***, full of both joy and sorrow. She submitted it to *Youth Daily*. And it was accepted for publication! The editor told her she had written genuine children's literature. She felt as if she had been roused from a long sleep.

In the fall of 1981 she worked day and night on a novella named ***Glittering Fireflies***. At that time, she determined to continue writing for children. Qin, initially in search of her lost happy childhood, grew to write about the childhood of other people and later of mankind with great fondness and passion. She respected children's nature and their right to life, hoping to rediscover childhood with her readers.

Qin Wenjun writes about things that move her as well as her readers. She does not repeat herself nor use exaggerated sentimentalism. Instead, she writes carefully, seeking the ideal artistic way to reveal perspectives often overlooked and to interpret human behavior with delicacy. She also writes to bring out the beauty in human nature. The characters in her books and the circumstances they experience are true to life. Her inspiration is her own memory as well as her care for and understanding of children. Proud of her own gender, she nonetheless writes about boys as well as girls. The "Ivory Tower" existence of urban children overburdened with intense school work and the intense relationships caused by overpopulation is subject matter for her. And she also writes books about peasants' children who have lost their lands because of urbanization. Facing both the ancient folk culture and the exciting urban culture, these children's lives undergo much change. There are millions of children whose lives are similar to those Qin Wenjun portrays in her stories. Many of her young readers say "the character in the book is me!"

Qin Wenjun is like a photographer of the soul. She captures the range of children's feelings from joy and surprise to sorrow and disappointment. Qin depicts children's perceptions of their world, emotions and under-

standings adults too often forget. Yet her characters, such as Jia Li, Jia Mei, Cluckie, and Aroma also remind us of the sheer fun of being a child.

In her books, we know that even when situations or environments may change, her pursuit of freedom and ever-lasting dream as an author of childhood will not alter. One example of her touching young hearts is the thousands of letters she receives from child readers, and she unfailingly responds to those who ask for help. By reading these letters, she knows children's capacity for introspection, knows their little secrets, and recognizes the infinite possibilities each child's life brings to the world. To bring their voices onto a wider stage, she wrote **Hello, My Little Readers**. She also visits schools and libraries in Asia, Europe, and the United States to communicate directly with youngsters. Children's sensitivities, tenderness, and also anxieties will not change; they will cherish their families and long for love forever. To discuss this, media such as the China Central Television and the U.S.-based SinoVision have had special interviews with Qin Wenjun.

Dear 16-Year-Old Me: Up to the Mountains in Northeast China, Qin's much praised novel epitomizes the eight years she lived in Heilongjiang. The dispiriting days of the Cultural Revolution, the remote forest, the snow-covered mountains, the sound of wind and blizzards, and the boundless land are the setting for her growth. Courageously, at the age of 62, she wrote **Youthful Moments** in which she castigates the Cultural Revolution and the enforced disruptions in teenagers' lives, yet she also portrays human resilience and people's ability to remain kind.

Qin Wenjun unfailingly loves and respects children's literature as if it were a star she gazes at every day. In 1982 after her first book was published, she accepted an offer from the publishing house to work there as an editor. Over the following 35 years, she moved up to Senior Vice President and Publisher, generously cultivating many new authors as part of her mission to further the availability of "glowing books for children." She is a prime mover in introducing children's literature to Chinese campuses, communities, and families. Indeed, she even donates the royalties of many of her books so that children in poor families and impoverished villages can afford to buy them. She diligently continues to write day and night; it seems she is still the young girl writing tirelessly by lampion light.

Over the past three decades, she has published more than 80 books, a remarkable artistic attainment, and has been honored with over 70 awards. These achievements can be attributed to her natural talent, her hard work, and, most importantly, her sense of mission. She sees both the beauty and the imperfection of the world and guards children's spirits with her intelligent literature that reflects and encourages calm, love, and courage.

This is her authorial philosophy: we can and must rediscover and revitalize beauty, human nature, warm-heartedness, and magical imagination in and through children's literature. This is her mission, the mission of literature for children, and the mission of humanity.



A Selected Illustration from Qin's Books



Qin Wenjun's Contributions to Children's and Adolescent Literature

Qin Wenjun is the standard for excellence and innovation in children's and adolescent literature in China, one of the foremost authors of the most populous country, and a frequent presence on the international stage.

Qin is a worthy candidate for the Hans Christian Anderson award. She has changed the way children and teenagers see themselves, and the way adults see them. Her rich and varied contributions to juvenile literature are elaborated under four headings:

I. Remarkable creative contributions

Qin Wenjun expresses her conviction that all children are worthy of being portrayed in her famous quote, "Each and every child is an irreplaceable miracle." The beauty and innocence she depicts are impossible for children themselves to put into literature and too often forgotten by adults. In her novel **Dear 16-Year-Old Me: Up to the Mountains in Northeast China**, for example, she writes profoundly of a young city girl forced to leave her home in Shanghai to live in a remote mountainous area during the dark days of China's Cultural Revolution. After reading the novel, a sixteen-year-old girl in south China was so inspired that she travelled 1000 kilometers from Guangdong to Shanghai just to meet the author, providing one example of the story's ability to open aesthetic and historical boundaries.

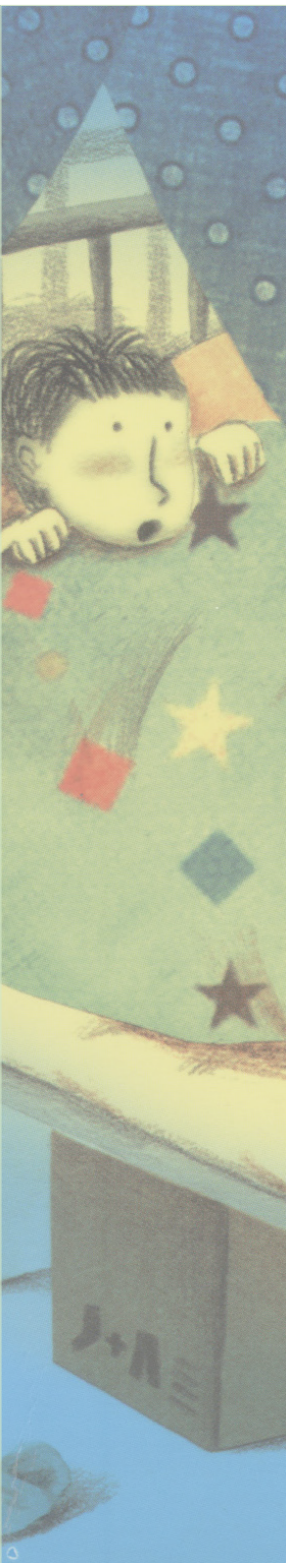
Qin Wenjun is able to write sensitively about children in both urban and rural settings, and of some children's negotiations between these settings. In her short story **My Little Brother's Green Manor**, Qin presents the little brother as a young boy pressured by overly-high expectations that cause him to suffer in school in a large city. Together with his grandfather, he goes to the family's home village 800 miles away to recuperate. There he gains self-confidence and inspiration. He becomes a happy child again, refusing to be seen as a loser. Even his demanding parents see him as a different person. Delicately and movingly, the characterizations and plot reveal the true nature of children, thus contributing to the expansion of subject matter in contemporary writing intended for young readers.

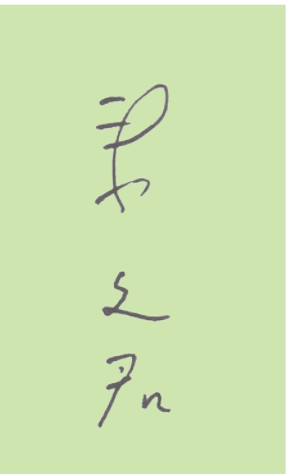
At the late 1980s, based on the status of children's literature then in China, Qin Wenjun proposed that "children's literature should center on children and humanity, with emotion expressed in interesting and diverse forms." During that period, books for children used a "deep pattern" expressing emotions and ideas so complicated that most little readers lost interest. Qin analyzed the problem, spearheaded a fundamental

change, and in 1991 put her literary perspective into practice with the publication of her novel **Jia Li in Junior High**. The book became the model of how to integrate "literariness" with "the nature of childhood." Between its humorous lines, readers could see the novel's beauty and tolerance of differences. Jia Li and Jia Mei are twins. Both are lively, intelligent, and full of funny ideas. Their spiritual world is fully described. **Jia Li in Junior High** won first place in the "Shanghai Outstanding Children's Literature Award" voted on by more than one million primary and secondary school children, and was highly acclaimed in critical circles as well. Thus began the "Qin Wenjun Phenomenon." The author had opened a space for humor in Chinese children's books; in fact, **Jia Li in Junior High** has been called "the first humorous Chinese novel about childhood."

Jia Li in Junior High has sold over three million copies and was made into a film, a TV series, a stage play, and a radio play. But Qin Wenjun refuses to repeat herself; she goes on to create diverse books using multiple points of view. In her novel **The Psyche of a Young Girl**, she concentrates on a girl from the perspective of her mother. The mother recalls tenderly the first time that Shen Shen, the daughter, undertakes a long journey, the first time she spends a night away from home, and the first time she is bullied at school. The author undertakes many difficult topics like self-identity, loss, maturation, and the attainment of happiness in the face of adversity. In her writings, Qin Wenjun rejects the simplification of children's experiences and the tendency to present all children as the same. While committed to making her writing entertaining, she focuses on the entire reality of children's lives. This commitment to depicting the process of self-discovery during childhood propelled other authors and, indeed, Chinese society and education sector, to fulfill their responsibility to respect childhood as a fundamental, crucial part of life experience. Not only has Qin changed the way youngsters see themselves, but the way adults see them as well.

Qin Wenjun advocates multiple genres in children's/juvenile literatures. To her, realism and fantasy are the "two wings" of literature, and authors can make great contributions by integrating them in their works. China's good stories for children had been mainly reality-based with few offering in fantasy. As Vice President of the Shanghai Writers' Association, Qin has influenced the development of fantasy writing in that city and indeed throughout the country, attending many conferences to express her opinions. Additionally, she has frequently written on the topic for key newspapers and periodicals such as *The People's Daily*. Among these articles is "Children's Literature Should Fly." In 2012, she began the fantasy trilogy **Prince's Long Night** in which





an over-protected prince and his family move into a mysterious old house vacant for 100 years. Inside the old walls is a lane that leads to “the back of the world.” The prince’s handsome father mistakenly enters the lane and is cursed to become a wolf. The father concealed the fact from the son, in front of whom he pretended to be a warm-hearted, protective messenger sent by the father, for fear of hurting the son’s feelings. The son’s devotion and bravery enable him to overcome the curse despite great difficulties that the author portrays imaginatively and humanely. The trilogy was extremely popular and won major awards, thereby providing new paradigms for children’s literature in China.

For her literary gifts and her stamina, Qin Wenjun is called “Superwoman” by other writers. In 2016, aged 62, she published **Youthful Moments**, a novel about a young boy, Wei Yi, who, living during China’s Cultural Revolution, receives very minimal social education. Through her meticulous phrasing, her humorous but incisive words, Qin Wenjun pushes artistic limits, this time by exploring troubling times in China’s history. In other works, however, she writes of 21st century children, for example in her beginning-reader books **Cluckie and Her Cousins**, **Aroma’s Little Garden**, and the picture books **As If...As If...** and **Hua Mulan**. Children are too young to express their own feelings in detail, but this author is able to enter their thoughts and hearts, sympathetically expressing for them what they cannot yet express themselves. Reading these books, youngsters see themselves realizing their dreams.

In the commercial world, Qin Wenjun has been very successful while never abandoning her high standards for literary excellence, a rare achievement honored not only by scores of prestigious awards in China but in other venues, for example Taiwan’s top honors, the “Yang Huan Prize for Children’s Literature” and the “Chiu Ko Modern Children’s Literature Award.” Well regarded by other authors, her books have set high standards for comparison.

II. Service as an outstanding publisher

Over her 35 years of writing, editing, and publishing, Qin Wenjun has encouraged and cultivated numerous new authors. She is the former Chief Editor of *Periodical of Selected Children’s Literature* (a journal on children’s literature theory) and the Chief Editor of *Chinese Children’s Literature* (a journal on children’s literature). For the latter, she wrote her philosophy on the title page: “for everlasting children’s literature, for love, for dreams, and for the future.”

A prime example of her devotion to discovering new talent is found in this anecdote: a young man from a small town submitted an article called “The Empty House” to the *Chinese Children’s Literature*. The submission was discarded after being hurriedly read by a member of the editorial staff. Qin Wenjun dug out the article from a wastepaper basket and decided to publish it after careful reading. The young man gained immediate fame and later won a national award for writing. This anecdote is representative of Qin Wenjun’s mission. Knowing that unknown writers are easily overlooked, she often works overtime to find articles others dismissed and to encourage new writers, even offering symposiums for them to show their manuscripts. Many now-famous Chinese authors received their first support from her including suggestions for revision. Among these are Peng Xuejun, Wang Yimei, Zeng Xiaochun, Wang Wei, Zhang Pincheng, Nan Ni, and Gu Wenyan; there are many others as well.

For more than three decades, Qin Wenjun has dedicated her time and resources to cultivating new literary voices. She lectures at master classes for young writers in many regions of China, goes to grassroots literary societies, and speaks at cultural forums in universities, always encouraging new authors to write innovative, illuminating literature and to persevere. Her contribution to presenting China with many of its most beloved, influential writers is immeasurable.

Starting in the 1930s, China developed a set of authoritative literary selections called *Anthology of Modern Chinese Literature*. This collection could be called “the annals of literature” because it included works written beginning in 1917. But it did not include children’s literature. Qin Wenjun used her influence and utmost skills to persuade the Editorial Board to add a two-volume selection of writings for children. But the Editorial Board presented her with a problem: they invited her to serve as the volumes’ Editor-in-Chief and to make the selections herself, covering works from 1979 to 2000. In order to do so, Qin Wenjun suspended her own writing and read nearly 1000 novels published over those 21 years after the end of the Cultural Revolution. Additionally, she provided both a historical overview and a theoretical framework. Her 20,000 Chinese character introduction refers to five generations of Chinese children’s authors and their work. For its comprehensiveness, the introduction was highly praised in publishing and educational circles.

The well-known critic Professor Zhu Ziqiang stated that “Qin Wenjun deserves our gratitude. My own view of children’s literature was largely formed by her comments. In my writing, I often mention her name.”

III. Activism in children's literature

As well as being a crucial supporter of children's authors and literature, Qin Wenjun is an activist. For many years she has served as the President of the China-Japan Children's Literature & Fine Arts Exchange Association, promoting awareness of children's literature and fine arts between the two countries. In 2008 in Shanghai, she founded the Shanghai Board on Books for Young People (SHBBY), a branch of CBBY, whose members include over 100 writers and illustrators from that city. She offered her villa to SHBBY, creating the "Cluckie's Reading House" to showcase works written by older, middle-aged and young writers of juvenile literature. To encourage children and adolescents to keep reading, she presided over public reading activities rich in creativity. A discussion about works of Naoko Awa, a Japanese female writer, for example, was conducted under the cherry blossoms. Qin Wenjun even invited children to establish "a bear museum" for "Hot Bun" the Magical Teddy Bear, the protagonist of a fantasy work written by a young writer. She personally arranged a snowflake-themed theatre for children during winter reading activities. And for the summer performance party of *Pippi Longstocking*, she bought to China the original Swedish stage properties. In 2011, Ahmad Khairuddin, the former Chairman of IBBY, visited the "Cluckie's Reading House" and wrote a passionate inscription, calling it the "Disneyland of Books."

In terms of significance to children's literature, Qin Wenjun is not simply a famous writer. Having read and thought deeply about world-famous children's literature, she has given keynote speeches like "Hans Christian Andersen's Talent and Courage" and "Mark Twain's Spirit of Humor" on China Central Television (CCTV) and in libraries and reading groups. In 2013, she held the post of Chief Planner of the 1st China Shanghai International Children's Book Fair. The participants numbered 17,400, and in 2014, she held the post again with even more visitors. China now has some 367 million juveniles. Qin Wenjun believes that the promotion of children's literature is like "one tree shaking another tree, a piece of cloud pushing another piece of cloud, and a soul awakening another soul." She has presented more than 1000 speeches on children's literature in campuses, cities, rural areas, and even borderlands. She recommends world children's literature works for social organizations, educational departments, children's media, and libraries. In addition, she wrote **Dear Bookcase**, which lists 100 good books and is used by more than one thousand schools. She takes writing good books for children and promoting good books as her faith.

Qin Wenjun has received more than 8,000 letters from her readers in Mainland China, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Australia, the United States, and so on. The young book-lovers are deeply attached to Qin and relies on her for advices with full trust. She reciprocates their affection and connects with them emotionally. Qin also interacts with her readers on newspapers and magazines and guides them out of adolescent anxiety. Giving attention and care to her readers, Qin expands her vision and feels a strong sense of responsibility for children around the world.



A Selected Illustration from Qin's Books

IV. Domestic and international influence

Qin Wenjun's works are extremely influential. Her essay "I Am Included on the Blacklist" was selected as teaching material for the Tenth Grade compiled by the Ministry of Education in Singapore. Other of her works have been selected as official and civil teaching material in various regions in China, such as ***The Potential to Be Great***, ***The Patient, My Cousin Is Here***, and ***The Election Disturbance***. Eight of her essays were selected as teaching material for primary and secondary schools in Hong Kong and Macao. Furthermore, several of her short stories have been selected as language learning material by the Kumon Educational Japan Co., Ltd..

Qin Wenjun is so well recognized because she has broadened the horizons of children's literature. Each year, Master's and PhD students prepare theses and dissertations studying her literary creations or her views on literature. Dozens of dissertations have been produced, such as *The Shaping of Chinese Females' Expectations through the Girl Characters in Qin Wenjun's Novels*. Foreign students also write dissertations about her. For example, Andrea Beständig at University of Erlangen-Nuremberg, Germany devoted more than 30 pages in her doctoral dissertation to discussing Qin Wenjun's literary pursuits.

Belinda Louie, a professor at the University of Washington, Tacoma, U.S.A., knows that Qin Wenjun's novel ***Jia Li in Junior High*** has great significance in Chinese children's literature. So, together with her husband, she translated the novel into English. And translations of more than 30 books by Qin Wenjun have been published outside Mainland China in various languages, such as Japanese, Dutch, Korean, English, and Traditional Chinese.

Qin Wenjun has been invited to give special speeches on children's literature in many places internationally, for instance, the U.S.'s Brooklyn Library, Sweden's Stockholm International Library, the Center for Fiction and the China Institute in New York, the Salon du Livre de Paris (Paris International Book Fair), the Asia Festival of Children's Content in Singapore, and the Macao Literary Festival. For a few years, as a literary guest and speaker, she has attended the Frankfurt and Hong Kong Book Fairs to share her experience in creating art for young readers.

She is an enthusiastic participant in IBBY's annual meetings, such as the ones in Seville, Spain in 1994; New Delhi, India in 1998; Basel, Switzerland in 2002; Cape Town, South Africa in 2004. At the 2006 IBBY Macao Plenary Session, Qin Wenjun was a keynote speaker; her topic was *Children's Literature Enlightens the World*. Qin Wenjun has served as a judge for major awards in children's literature, such as the Lu Xun Juvenile Literature

Award, the National Book Award, and the Hong Kong Biennial Award for Chinese Literature, performing as the Chief Judge several times. As an honored invitee, she attended the academic exchange at the National Dong Hwa University and the National Taitung University in Taiwan and has delivered keynote speeches at the Japanese Fukuoka Asian Children's Literature Conference and the Jinhua Asian Children's Literature Conference. In order to discuss the tradition and status quo of reading and publication in children's literature, she participated in a panel discussion in Budapest, Hungary with local writers, including Mr. Jeney Zoltánt, Hungarian Board on Books for Young People (HUBBY).

Qin Wenjun has developed her broad, international perspectives through visiting Japan five times, Germany five times, the United States three times, France three times, Sweden three times and Spain twice. Over the past 35 years, she has been to many other countries and regions, including Russia, Bulgaria, the U.K., Egypt, Norway, Italy, South Africa, Kenya, Finland, the Netherlands, Thailand, India, New Zealand, Australia, Singapore, Malaysia, Portugal, the Czech Republic, Vietnam, Switzerland and Austria, participating in meaningful dialogues on children's literature with local writers and expanding international understanding.

In recent years, Qin Wenjun has been invited to schools overseas such as Avenues: The World School, and the Dalton School. She communicates with children and adolescents outside Asia about literature in order to have a better appreciation of their desires, dreams, curiosity, self-identity and self-worth. The emotions and visions of children and teenagers all over the world continue to be Qin Wenjun's primary interest and concern.

Qin Wenjun is among the most popular writers of children's literature in China, winning the most awards in modern times. China is proud of her because of this and also because she opens a light on the night sky, enabling people to see myriads of glittering stars. As a writer of children's literature, she has lofty thoughts and a winning personality. She has also made enormous selfless contributions in such areas as the cultivation of new children's authors, the promotion of children's reading, the building of book-loving families and communities, and the improvement of cultural understanding among various countries.



List of Awards and Other Distinctions

Qin Wenjun has won more than 80 prestigious awards in mainland China, Taiwan, and abroad, including National Book Award, Chinese Government Award for Publications, National Dandelion Award of the Ministry of Culture, China Book Award, Chen Bochui International Children's Literature Award, Taiwan Yang Huan Award for Children's Literature, Taiwan Chiu Ko Modern Children's Literature Award, and Special Prize of Premio Letterario Internazionale Mondello. Qin has received 4 times National Children's Literature Award of China Writers Association, 5 times "Five-One Project" Award for China's Construction of Spiritual Civilization, and 10 times Bingxin Award for Children's Literature. As a prolific writer of great creativity and high artistic achievements, as well as an active and well-reputed publisher, Qin is considered the role model for her peer workers and all the professional women in China. She has thus been named "the National Pace-Setter for Female Professionals" and "the National Excellent Children's Social Worker". Qin, adored by her readers, has been voted "the Most Beloved Contemporary Writer" according to polls conducted with young readers. In addition to writing and publishing, Qin has contributed to education and research in juvenile literature. Since 2010, Qin has served as Adjunct Professor of Literature at Children's Cultural Research Institute of Zhejiang Normal University.

YEAR	TITLE	AWARDS
1985	<i>Alas, Mamayi</i> (short story)	Gardener Award for Children's Literature
Dec 1986	<i>Luo Wei the Young Girl</i> (short story)	Dunhuang Award for Literature
May 1988	<i>A Farewell to Yi Fan</i> (short story)	Soulmate Award for Middle School Novels of Shanghai
Apr 1988	<i>May the Sun Shine Upon You</i> (short story)	Shanghai Alice Award for Literature
1989	<i>My Little Brother's Green Manor</i> (short story)	First Prize at China-Taiwan Chinese Children's Literature Grand Contest
1989	<i>The Solitary Middle School Student / Mother's Day of Suffering</i> (non-fiction novellas)	First Prize at Non-Fiction Writing Grand Contest
1989	<i>My Little Brother's Green Manor</i> (short story)	Gardener Award for Children's Literature
1989	<i>Goodbye, My Village Far, Far Away</i> (novella)	Second Prize of Modern Chinese Children's Literature Award

Apr 1989	<i>Maria Forever</i> (short story)	Outstanding Writing Prize of Youth Literature Journal
Jun 1989	<i>Dear 16-Year-Old Me: Up to the Mountains in Northeast China</i> (novel)	Excellent Award of Books Loved by Female Readers and Young Readers of China
1993	<i>Orphan Girls' Club</i> (novel)	Second Prize of National Outstanding Children's Literature Award
Feb 1993	<i>Luo Wei the Young Girl</i> (collection of short stories)	The 2nd National Children's Literature Award of China Writers Association
May 1993	<i>Collected Children's Novellas of Qin Wenjun</i>	The 5th Taiwan Yang Huan Award for Children's Literature
1994	<i>Jia Li in Junior High</i> (novel)	First Prize of the 1st Literary Giants Award for Novellas and Novels
1994	<i>Jia Mei in Junior High</i> (novel)	The 7th Outstanding Children's Literature Award
Jun 1994	<i>My Half-Brother Is a Clown</i> (novella)	The 2nd Taiwan Chiu Ko Modern Children's Literature Award
1995	<i>Jia Li in Junior High</i> (novella)	The 3rd Shanghai Award for Literature and Excellent Artistic Achievement
1995	<i>Jia Mei in Junior High</i> (novella)	The 9th China Book Award
1995	<i>Jia Mei in Junior High</i> (novel)	Five-One Project Award in the 5th Session of China's Construction of Spiritual Civilization
1995	<i>Orphan Girls' Club</i> (novel)	Five-One Project Award in the 5th Session of China's Construction of Spiritual Civilization
1995	<i>Orphan Girls' Club</i> (novel)	Second Prize of the National Outstanding Children's Literature Award
1996	<i>Jia Li in Junior High</i> (novel)	First Prize of Shanghai Outstanding Children's Literature Award
1996	<i>Jia Li in Junior High</i> (novel)	First Prize of National Outstanding Children's Literature Award
1996	<i>Home Alone</i> (collection of novellas)	Literary Giants Award for Excellent Novels and Novellas
1996	<i>Home Alone</i> (collection of novellas)	Five-One Project Award in the 6th Session of China's Construction of Spiritual Civilization
1996	<i>Jia Mei in Junior High</i> (novel)	The 8th National "Golden Key" Award for Books
1996		Special Prize of Premio Letterario Internazionale Mondello, Italy
1996	<i>Happy Girls</i> (novella)	Chosen for the Best New Book List by the United Daily News, Taiwan
Jun 1996	<i>Jia Li in Junior High</i> (novel)	The 3rd National Children's Literature Award of China Writers Association
May 1997		Magnolia Award for Children's Social Work

List of Awards and other Distinctions

YEAR	TITLE	AWARDS
1998	<i>Lu Zhi-Sheng the Smart Boy</i> (novel)	National Bestseller Award
1998	<i>My Little Brother's Green Manor</i> (collection of short stories)	Bingxin Award for Children's Literature
Mar 1998	<i>My Tutor Old Zhou</i> (short story)	Outstanding Writing Prize of Youth Literature Journal
Aug 1999	<i>The Birthday of the Little Bear</i> (picture book)	The 2nd "Little Pine Tree" Award for Children's Picture Books
Sep 1999	<i>Jia Li in Junior High</i> (novel)	Five-One Project Award in the 7th Session of China's Construction of Spiritual Civilization
Nov 1999	<i>Jia Li in Junior High</i> (novel)	named "the Outstanding Novel in the 50-Year History of the People's Republic of China"
May 2000	<i>Lu Zhi-Sheng the Smart Boy</i> (novel)	The 4th National Children's Literature Award of China Writers Association
2000	<i>Lu Zhi-Sheng the Smart Boy</i> (TV series)	China TV Drama Flying Apsaras Award
June 2000		Named "the National Excellent Children's Social Worker" by the State Council
Nov 2001	<i>New Fairy Tales of the Good Aunt, Lucky Flowers for the Little Bear</i> (fairy tale)	The 5th National Books Award
2002		Nominated for Hans Christian Andersen Award (HCAA) established by International Board on Books for Young People (IBBY)
2002	<i>Cluckie and Her Cousins</i> (book series)	Bingxin Award for Children's Literature
Feb 2002	<i>Collected Works of Qin Wenjun</i> (in 5 volumes)	First Prize of Excellent Books for Primary and Secondary School Students of Shanghai
Mar 2002		Named "Role Model for Shanghai Female Professionals of Shanghai"
Mar 2002		Named "Outstanding Female Professional of China"
May 2002	<i>Monologues by Liu Ge-Shi, the Boy That Stutters</i> (novel)	The 5th National Children's Literature Award of China Writers Association
Sep 2003	<i>3 Tian Tang Street</i> (novel)	First Prize of National Outstanding Children's Literature Award
Oct 2003	<i>3 Tian Tang Street</i> (novel)	Soong Ching-ling Award for Children's Literature
Oct 2003	<i>Little Boy Du Qi</i> (novella)	Bingxin Award for Children's Literature
Jun 2004	<i>Jia Mei in Junior High: A Complete Biography</i> (novel)	Excellent Work Award of Peoples' Artistic Creation of Shanghai
Dec 2004	<i>Jia Mei in Junior High: A Complete Biography</i> (novel)	Gold Medal of National Dandelion Award of the Ministry of Culture

Jun 2005	<i>House of Kala Kela the Big Dog</i> (fairy tale)	Gold Medal of the 21st Chen Bochui Children's Literature Award
Nov 2005	<i>My Half-Brother Is a Clown</i> (Unabridged) (novella)	Bingxin Award for Children's Literature
2006	<i>Cluckie and Her Cousins</i> (stage play)	Creativity Award of Stage Play of Beijing
Dec 2007	<i>Kala Kela the Toy Dog</i> (picture book)	First Prize of the 6th National Preschool Children's Literature Award
2008		Nominated for the Hans Christian Andersen Award (HCAA) established by the International Board on Books for Young People (IBBY)
2008	<i>House of Kala Kela the Big Dog</i> (fairy tale)	Gold Medal of Shanghai Preschool Children's Literature Award
Nov 2008	<i>The Dancing Sunflower</i> (novel)	Bingxin Award for Children's Literature
2009		Nominated for the Astrid Lindgren Memorial Award (ALMA) established by the Swedish Government
Nov 2009	<i>Happy Girls</i> (novella)	Bingxin Award for Children's Literature
Dec 2009		Named "the Most Beloved Contemporary Writer" according to the 1st Poll Conducted with China's Primary and Middle School Students'
2010	<i>Jia Li in Junior High: A New Biography</i> (film)	China Huabiao Film Awards
2010	<i>Yun Shang and the 2008 Sichuan Earthquake</i> (novella)	Five-One Project Award in the 10th Session of China's Construction of Spiritual Civilization
Mar 2010	<i>Jia Li in Junior High: A New Biography</i> (novel)	Chunshen Award for Original Writing
Feb 2010	<i>Yun Shang and the 2008 Sichuan Earthquake</i> (novella)	Shanghai Artist Honorary Award
Since 2010		Qin Wenjun has been Adjunct Professor of Literature at Children's Cultural Research Institute of Zhejiang Normal University.
Apr 2011	<i>Diary of Jia Mei in Junior High</i> (novel)	named "Children's Favorite Excellent Book of Shanghai"
Dec 2011	<i>Dreams of Flowers</i> (collection of essays)	Bingxin Award for Children's Literature
2012	<i>Prince's Long Night</i> (fantasy novel)	named "the Most Beloved Book according to the Poll Conducted by General Administration of Press and Publication of China"
Nov 2012	<i>Longing to See Mi Nan</i> (collection of short stories)	Bingxin Award for Children's Literature
2013	<i>Hello, My Little Readers</i> (collection of epistolary essays)	China Excellent Publication Award
Sep 2013	<i>Aroma Is Not a Stupid Girl</i> (novella)	Shanghai Preschool Children's Literature Award

List of Awards and other Distinctions

YEAR	TITLE	AWARDS
2013	<i>Prince's Long Night</i> (fantasy novel)	The 3rd Chinese Government Award for Publications
Mar 2014	<i>Prince's Long Night</i> (fantasy novel)	Excellent Single Achievement Award for Literary and Artistic Creation of Shanghai
2015	<i>My Father with a Heart of Stone</i> (novella)	Chosen as one of "the 10 Best Children's Books" by China Reading Weekly
Feb 2015		Named "the National Pace-Setter for Female Professionals"
Oct 2015	<i>Pearl's Little Mama</i> (novella)	Shanghai Preschool Children's Literature Award
2016		Named the "Most Beloved Writer of Chinese Young Readers" according to a poll conducted by Dangdang, a popular Chinese electronic commerce company and online bookstore
2016	<i>My Father with a Heart of Stone</i> (novella)	Chen Bochui International Children's Literature Award
2016	<i>Prince's Wonderland</i> (fantasy novel)	Bingxin Award for Children's Literature
2016	<i>As if...As if...</i> (picture book)	Bingxin Award for Children's Literature
2016	<i>As if...As if...</i> (picture book)	Silver Medal of the 1st Epoch Award for Picture Books
2016	<i>As if...As if...</i> (picture book)	Excellent Original Picture Book Award at the Chinese Children "Reading Plus" Forum
2016	<i>As if...As if...</i> (picture book)	First Prize of Editor's Award for Children's Books of Eastern China
2016	<i>As if...As if...</i> (picture book)	Chosen as one of "the 10 Children's Books Recommended by Chinese Teachers"
2016	<i>As if...As if...</i> (picture book)	Chosen as one of "the 100 Books Recommended to Chinese Teenagers" by the General Administration of Press and Publication of China
2016	<i>As if...As if...</i> (picture book)	Chosen for "Chinese Children's Book World" Exhibition at the 2016 Frankfurt Book Fair



A Selected Illustration from Qin's Books

Complete Bibliography of the Books for Young People

Sweet Jujubes, essay,
Youth Daily, China, 1981

Glittering Fireflies, novella,
The Literary Giants (journal), China, 1982

A Bright Boy and His Independence Team, novella,
Jiangsu Juvenile and Children's Publishing House, China, 1985

Change, Change, Change!, novella,
China Children's Press & Publication Group, China, 1985

Goodbye, My Village Far, Far Away, novella,
New Buds Publishing House, China, 1985

Grey Cat at the Age of Eleven, collection of novellas,
Chongqing Publishing Group, China, 1988

Younger Sister with Black Hair, novella,
China Children's Press & Publication Group, China, 1988

Dear 16-Year-Old Me: Up to the Mountains in Northeast China, novel,
Published by Baihua Literature and Art Publishing House, 1988

Luo Wei the Young Girl, collection of short stories,
Shanghai Juvenile & Children's Publishing House, China, 1988

Selected Children's Novellas of Qin Wenjun, collection of novellas,
Shanghai Juvenile & Children's Publishing House, China, 1991

Orphan Girls' Club, novel,
Jiangsu Juvenile and Children's Publishing House, China, 1991

Jia Mei in Junior High, novel,
Anhui Children's Publishing House, China, 1993

Jia Li in Junior High, novel,
Shanghai Juvenile & Children's Publishing House, China, 1993

Jia Li in Junior High, novel (traditional Chinese version),
Tien Wei Publishing Co., Ltd., Taiwan, China, 1993

I Am Such a Girl, novella,
China Children's Press & Publication Group, China, 1993

Emotions and Psyche of Middle School Students, non-fiction novel,
Shanghai Juvenile & Children's Publishing House, China, 1994

Boys and Girls at the Summer Camp, novella,
Hunan Juvenile and Children's Publishing House, China, 1994

My Half-Brother Is a Clown, novella (traditional Chinese version),
Chiu Ko Publishing Co., Ltd., Taiwan, China, 1994

Young Hearts, novella,
Petrel Publishing House, China, 1994

Tears and Laughter, collection of essays,
Shanghai Far East Publishers, China, 1995

Girls in a Boat, collection of essays,
Anhui Children's Publishing House, China, 1995

Land of Heroes: the Kalewala Rewrite (traditional Chinese version),
China Times Publishing Co., Taiwan, China, 1996

Home Alone, collection of novellas,
Shanghai Juvenile & Children's Publishing House, China, 1996

Old Grandmother's Little House, collection of novellas and short stories,
Wenhui Publishing House, China, 1996

The First Salvo, collection of essays,
Hainan Publishing House Co., Ltd., China, 1996

Jia Li in Junior High, screenplay,
China Children's Film Studio, China, 1996.

Jia Li in Junior High, novel (Japanese version),
Iwasaki Publishing Co., Ltd., Japan 1996

Happy Girls, novella (traditional Chinese version),
Min Sheng Publishing House, Taiwan, China, 1996

Selected Award-Winning Novel Series of Qin Wenjun,
Writers Publishing House, China, 1997

Jia Li in Junior High, novel (English version),
Shanghai Juvenile & Children's Publishing House, China, 1997





Lu Zhi-Sheng the Smart Boy, novel,
Writers Publishing House, China, 1997

The Birthday of the Little Bear, picture book,
China Juvenile & Children's Publishing House, China, 1997

Tulippa and Honey, novella,
Taibai Literature and Art Publishing House, China, 1997

Lin Xiao-Mei the Bright Girl, novel,
Writers Publishing House, China, 1998

The Days When We Were Naughty, novella,
Chunfeng Literature & Art Publishing House, China, 1998

Ding Bao the Little Fairy, fantasy fiction,
21st Century Publishing Group, China, 1998

My Little Brother's Green Manor, collection of short stories,
Hebei Education Publishing House, China, 1998

Collected Works of Qin Wenjun (in 5 volumes),
Anhui Children's Publishing House, China, 1998

Jia Mei in Junior High, screenplay for 20-episode television series,
Shanghai Television Station, China, 1998

Jia Li in Junior High, novel (English version),
Shanghai Juvenile & Children's Publishing House, China, 1998

Jia Li in Junior High, novel (Dutch version),
Koninklijk Instituut voor de Tropen, the Netherlands, 1998

Jia Mei in Junior High: A New Biography, novel,
Shanghai Juvenile & Children's Publishing House, China, 1999

Joyce the Orphan Boy, novella,
Liaoning Children's Publishing House, China, 1999

Lucky Flowers for the Little Bear Girl, fairy tale,
Fujian Children's Publishing House, China, 1999

A Promise That Will Be Kept, collection of essays,
Hubei Children's Publishing House, China, 1999

Maria Forever, collection of short stories (Chinese version),
Penerbitan Pelangi Sdn. Bhd., Malaysia, 1999

The Psyche of a Young Girl, novel,
Jiangsu Literature and Art Publishing House, China, 2000

Monologues by Liu Ge-Shi, the Boy That Stutters, novel,
Writers Publishing House, China, 2000

Thank You for the Silence, collection of essays,
Anhui Children's Publishing House, China, 2000

The Days When We Were Naughty, novella (traditional Chinese version),
Min Sheng Publishing House, Taiwan, China, 2000

3 Tian Tang Street, novel,
Jiangsu Juvenile and Children's Publishing House, China, 2001

What I Am Grateful for in Life, essay collection,
Published by Beijing Children's Publishing House, China, 2001

The Rice Cake and Bun Brothers Live on Their Alfalfa Farm, novella,
China Children's Press & Publication Group, China, 2001

The Girl Trilogy, collection of novellas,
Wenhui Publishing House, China, 2001

Naughty, Carefree, and Not Overseen, novella (traditional Chinese version),
Cotton Tree Publishing Ltd., Hong Kong, China, 2001

Oh, My Bad Girl, collection of short stories,
People's Literature Publishing House, China, 2002

The Summer When Girls were 15, novel,
Jieli Publishing House, China, 2002

The Loving Heart, collection of short stories (Japanese version),
Nippon Hyojun Co., Ltd., Japan, 2002

The Beautiful Girls in Shanghai, novel (traditional Chinese version),
Chiu Ko Publishing Co., Ltd., Taiwan, China, 2002

Girls at the Age of Blossoms, novel (traditional Chinese version),
Chiu Ko Publishing Co., Ltd., Taiwan, China, 2002

Little Boy Du Qi, novella,
Published by Zhejiang Juvenile and Children's Books Publishing House, 2002

Cluckie and Her Cousins, novella,
Beijing Children's Publishing House, China, 2003

Lu Zhi-Sheng the Smart Boy, novel (traditional Chinese version),
Chiu Ko Publishing Co., Ltd., Taiwan, China, 2003

House of Kala Kela the Big Dog, medium-length fairy tale,
China Welfare Institute Publishing House, China, 2004



Li Li Does Not Like Girls, novel,
Jiangsu Juvenile and Children's Publishing House, China, 2004

Flee, Flee, novel,
Chunfeng Literature and Art Publishing House, China, 2004

Jia Li in Junior High, novel (traditional Chinese version),
Cotton Tree Publishing Ltd., Hong Kong, China, 2004

Jia Mei in Junior High, novel (traditional Chinese version),
Cotton Tree Publishing Ltd., Hong Kong, China, 2004

Lin Xiao-Mei's Time to Bloom, novel,
Jieli Publishing House, China, 2004

Collected Essays of Qin Wenjun (in 10 volumes, each named after a flower),
Jieli Publishing House, China, 2005

My Half-Brother Is a Clown and Other Stories, novella,
China Welfare Institute Publishing House, China, 2005

Meet the Bun and Rice Cake Brothers, novella (traditional Chinese version),
Cotton Tree Publishing Ltd., Hong Kong, China, 2005

Girls at the Age of Blossoms, novel (traditional Chinese version),
Green Publishing Ltd., Hong Kong, China, 2005

The 10001 Reasons to Live, collection of essays (traditional Chinese version),
Peace Book Co., Ltd., Hong Kong, China, 2005

Smiling Kala Kela, picture book (English version),
Long River Press, U.S.A., 2005

3 Tian Tang Street, novel (English version),
Long River Press, U.S.A., 2005

Curly the Black Goat, Hoopy the White Goat, picture book (English version),
Long River Press, U.S.A., 2006

Li Li the Naughty Boy, novella,
Jiangsu Juvenile and Children's Publishing House, China, 2006

Happy Girls, novella (Chinese-English bilingual version),
China Welfare Institute Publishing House, China, 2006

Happy Boys, novella (Chinese-English bilingual version),
China Welfare Institute Publishing House, China, 2006

Kala Kela the Toy Dog, picture book,
China Welfare Institute Publishing House, China, 2006



Jia Li in Junior High: A New Biography, novel (traditional Chinese version),
Cotton Tree Publishing Ltd., Hong Kong, China, 2007

Jia Mei in Junior High: A New Biography, novel (traditional Chinese version),
Cotton Tree Publishing Ltd., Hong Kong, China, 2007

Yu Lin and Liu Han, novel,
Shanghai Literature and Art Publishing House, China, 2007

The 10001 Reasons to Live, collection of essays,
Shanghai Literature and Art Publishing House, China, 2007

My Desk Mate Lun, novella,
Shanghai Literature and Art Publishing House, China, 2007

Gold Boys and Emerald Girls, novella,
Shanghai Literature and Art Publishing House, China, 2007

My Little Brother's Green Manor, collection of short stories,
New Century Publishing House, China, 2008

Pigtail Ya Ya, novella,
Guizhou People's Publishing House, China, 2009

The Dancing Sunflower, novel,
Beijing October Literature and Art Publishing House, China, 2009

Sweet-smelling Mama, picture book,
Hunan Children's Publishing House, China, 2009

Not Your Typical Papa, picture book,
Hunan Children's Publishing House, China, 2009

Yun Shang and the 2008 Sichuan Earthquake, novella,
Chunfeng Literature and Art Publishing House, China, 2009

I Don't Wanna Move Away, novella,
Qingdao Publishing House, China, 2009

The Curious Adventures of Du Qi and Mo, novella,
Qingdao Publishing House, China, 2009

Hello, My Little Readers, collection of epistolary essays,
Anhui Children's Publishing House, China, 2009

Masterpieces of Qin Wenjun's Coming-of-age Novels, collection of short stories,
Shanghai Juvenile & Children's Publishing House, China, 2009

Anthology of Modern Chinese Literature (1976-2000), Vol. 23. & 24. Children's
Literature (Qin Wenjun as editor-in-chief of the two volumes),
Shanghai Literature and Art Publishing House, China, 2009

No worries, My Child. Mama Will Find a Way, collection of essays, Writers Publishing House, China, 2010

An Exciting Journey: Reading and Writing Children's Literature, symposium, Shanghai Juvenile & Children's Publishing House, 2010

Selected Masterpieces of Qin Wenjun's Works, collection of novels, novellas, and short stories, World Book, Inc., China, 2010

The Days When We Were Naughty, novella (limited edition collectible), Chunfeng Literature and Art Publishing House, China, 2010

The Big Dog and His Bunny Pillow, picture book, China Children's Press & Publication Group, China, 2010

Diary of Jia Li in Junior High, novel, Shanghai Juvenile & Children's Publishing House, China, 2011

Diary of Jia Mei in Junior High, novel, Shanghai Juvenile & Children's Publishing House, China, 2011

A Music Box, collection of essays, Shanghai Juvenile & Children's Publishing House, China, 2011

Dreams of Flowers, collection of essays, Fujian Children's Publishing House, China, 2011

Longing to See Mi Nan, collection of short stories, Fujian Children's Publishing House, China, 2011

Dear Bookcase, collection of reading reflections, Fujian Children's Publishing House, China, 2011

Dear 16-Year-Old Me: Up to the Mountains in Northeast China, novel, Beijing October Literature and Art Publishing House, China, 2011

The Kids Flock Together, collection of short stories, Sichuan Children's Publishing House, China, 2011

The Mysterious Mascot, collection of children's novellas, Zhejiang Literature and Art Publishing House, China, 2011

Prince's Long Night, fantasy novel, Hunan Children's Publishing House, China, 2012

Aroma Is Not a Stupid Girl, novella, Tomorrow Publishing House, China, 2012

Pomelo, the Boy That Lives in the South, novella, Beijing Children's Publishing House, China, 2012

Mao Ni, the Clumsy Big Girl, collection of short stories, Published by Beijing Children's Publishing House, China, 2012

Jia Li in Junior High, novel (Korean version), Borim Press, Korea, 2012

Jia Li in Junior High: A New Biography, novel (Korean version), Borim Press, Korea, 2012

Cluckie and Her Cousins, novella, Tongxin Publishing House, China, 2012

Cluckie and the Flying Heart-breaking Sour Plum, novella, Tongxin Publishing House, China, 2012

Cluckie and the Floating Prom Queen, novella, Tongxin Publishing House, China, 2012

Cluckie and Mr. Choi, novella, Tongxin Publishing House, China, 2012

Prince's Wonderland, fantasy novel, Hunan Children's Publishing House, China, 2013

Jia Li in Junior High: A Complete Biography, novel (limited edition collectible), Shanghai Juvenile & Children's Publishing House, China, 2013

Jia Mei in Junior High: A Complete Biography, novel (limited edition collectible), Shanghai Juvenile & Children's Publishing House, China, 2013

The Boy in the Fog, collection of short stories, Modern Press, China, 2013

In This Very Summer, collection of short stories, Tomorrow Publishing House, China, 2013

Jia Mei in Junior High, novel (Korean version), Changbi Publishers, Inc., Korea, 2013

Flee to the Thousand-Bird Land, fantasy novel, Jieli Publishing House, China, 2014

The Magic to Exchange Moms, fantasy novel, Jieli Publishing House, China, 2014

The Spoiled Princess, fantasy novel, Jieli Publishing House, China, 2014

May the Sun Shine Upon You, collection of short stories, Jilin Fine Arts Publishing, China, 2014



The Mysterious Promise, novella,
Children's Fun Publishing Co., Ltd., China, 2015

Do I Have the Potential to Be Great?, novella,
Children's Fun Publishing Co., Ltd., China, 2015

Countless Things in the Mind, novella,
Children's Fun Publishing Co., Ltd., China, 2015

My Cousin Is Here, collection of novella and short stories,
Dolphin Books Co., Ltd., China, 2015

As If...As If..., picture book,
Tomorrow Publishing House, China, 2015

As If...As If..., picture book (English version),
Tomorrow Publishing House, China, 2015

Granny's Big Cat and Small Cat, picture book,
Tomorrow Publishing House, China, 2015

The Appetizing Festival, picture book,
Tomorrow Publishing House, China, 2015

Listen to the Flowers Blooming, collection of essays on how to read and write,
Shanghai Juvenile & Children's Publishing House, China, 2015

My Father with a Heart of Stone, novella,
Shanghai Juvenile & Children's Publishing House, China, 2015

Pearl's Little Mama, novella,
Shanghai Juvenile & Children's Publishing House, China, 2015

Rainbow Books of Qin Wenjun, collection of essays,
Jieli Publishing House, China, 2015

Whispers from the Tree, novella,
Chunfeng Literature and Art Publishing House, China, 2016

The Princess in Her Little Garden, novella,
Chunfeng Literature and Art Publishing House, China, 2016

Be a Good Girl for Three Days, novella,
Chunfeng Literature and Art Publishing House, China, 2016

A Feast for the Miser, novella,
Chunfeng Literature and Art Publishing House, China, 2016

The Color Teacher, novella,
Chunfeng Literature and Art Publishing House, China, 2016



A complete bibliography

Aroma's Little Garden, collection of novellas (English version),
Tomorrow Publishing House, China, 2016

Aroma's Little Garden, collection of novellas (English version),
Better Link Press, U.S.A., 2016

Prince's Secret Messenger, fantasy novel,
Hunan Children's Publishing House, China, 2016

A Concert of Raindrops, novella,
Tomorrow Publishing House, China, 2016

Paper Slip Loaded with Blooming Flowers, novella,
Tomorrow Publishing House, China, 2016

Youthful Moments, novel,
Harvest Magazine: A Literary Bimonthly, China, 2016

Messie the Puppy, picture book,
Tomorrow Publishing House, China, 2017

Youthful Moments, novel (English version),
China Children's Press & Publication Group, China, 2017

Hua Mulan, picture book (English version),
China Children's Press & Publication Group, China, 2017



JUREN
男生贾里
NAN SHENG JIALI

秦文君
花样的小女年华
贾梅的甜蜜年华

十八岁少女

秦文君小说系列
女生贾梅
十八岁少女

四弟的绿庄园
DIDELIZHUANGYUAN

调皮的日子
TAOPIDUO RIZI

男生贾里新传
秦文君

别了,远方的小屯

感恩生活

大狗和小兔枕头

3 Tian Tang Street
QIN WENJUN

3 Tian Tang Street
QIN WENJUN

3 Tian Tang Street
QIN WENJUN

别和美丽擦肩而过

给梦一双透明的翅膀

每一点光都闪亮

全世界都是你的远方

微笑是最美的晴朗

因为有你,不孤单

总有一天要勇敢

小鬼鲁智胜
头号人物

安顿是男孩就好了

孤儿乐子

第一声喝彩
孤女俱樂部
gunü julebu

3 Tian Tang Street
QIN WENJUN

3 Tian Tang Street
QIN WENJUN

别和美丽擦肩而过

给梦一双透明的翅膀

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小鬼鲁智胜
头号人物

安顿是男孩就好了

孤儿乐子

第一声喝彩
孤女俱樂部
gunü julebu

黑头发妹妹

黑头发妹妹

花彩少女的事儿

小狗梅西

爸爸最不像爸爸

妈妈香

女生贾梅

金童玉女

老祖母的小房子

活着的,一万零一条理由

女孩船

家有小丑

坏表哥找上门

坏表哥找上门

坏表哥找上门

贾里日记

开心男孩

开心女孩

儿童文学读写之旅

Youthful Moments

秦文君
儿童文学精品赏析

秦文君
儿童文学精品赏析

秦文君
儿童文学精品赏析

我的石头心爸爸

珍珠小妈妈

力力不喜欢女孩

力力不喜欢女孩

力力不喜欢女孩

贾梅日记

남학생 자리

남학생 자리

花彩少女的事儿

秦文君
女生贾梅全传

秦文君
女生贾梅全传

JIA LI
IN JUNIOR HIGH
QIN WENJUN

JIA LI
IN JUNIOR HIGH
QIN WENJUN

美丽的上海少女

男生贾里

秦文君
女孩三部曲

静听花开的声音

你好,小读者

我的坏女孩

여학생 자메이

亲爱的书树

梦想

QIN WENJUN
JIA LI
IN DE BRUGKLAS

男生贾里

女生贾梅

男生贾里

女生贾梅

孩子,妈妈一定有办法

杜齐阿莫的奇遇

Smiling Kalakela

Smiling Kalakela

List of Publications outside Mainland China



Jia Li in Junior High
novel
traditional Chinese
Tien Wei Publishing Co., Ltd.,
Taiwan, 1993



My Half-Brother Is a Clown
novella
traditional Chinese
Chiu Ko Publishing Co., Ltd.,
Taiwan, 1994



Land of Heroes: the Kalewala Rewrite
novel
traditional Chinese
China Times Publishing Co.,
Taiwan, 1996



Happy Girls
novella
traditional Chinese
Min Sheng Publishing House,
Taiwan, 1996



Jia Li in Junior High
novel
Japanese
Iwasaki Publishing Co., Ltd.,
Japan, 1996



Jia Li in Junior High
novel
Dutch
Koninklijk Instituut voor de
Tropen, the Netherlands,
1998



Maria Forever
collection of short stories
traditional Chinese
Penerbitan Pelangi Sdn. Bhd.,
Malaysia, 1999



The Days When We Were Naughty
novella
traditional Chinese
Min Sheng Publishing House,
Taiwan, 2000



Naughty, Carefree, and Not Overseen
novella
traditional Chinese
Cotton Tree Publishing Ltd.,
Hong Kong, 2001



The Loving Heart
collection of short stories
Japanese
Nippon Hyojun Co., Ltd., 2002



The Beautiful Girls in Shanghai
novel
traditional Chinese
Chiu Ko Publishing Co., Ltd.,
Taiwan, 2002



Girls at the Age of Blossoms
novel
traditional Chinese
Chiu Ko Publishing Co., Ltd.,
Taiwan, 2002



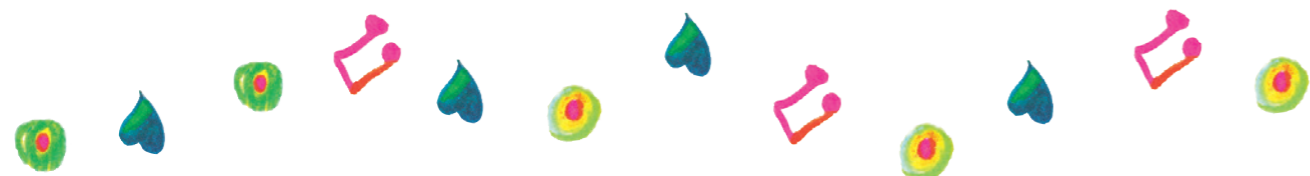
Lu Zhi-Sheng the Smart Boy
novel
traditional Chinese
Chiu Ko Publishing Co., Ltd.,
Taiwan, 2003



Jia Li in Junior High
novel
traditional Chinese
Cotton Tree Publishing Ltd.,
Hong Kong, 2004



Jia Mei in Junior High
novel
traditional Chinese
Cotton Tree Publishing Ltd.,
Hong Kong, 2004





Meet the Bun and Rice Cake Brothers
novella
traditional Chinese
Cotton Tree Publishing Ltd.,
Hong Kong, 2005



Girls at the Age of Blossoms
novel
traditional Chinese
Green Publishing Ltd., Hong
Kong, 2005



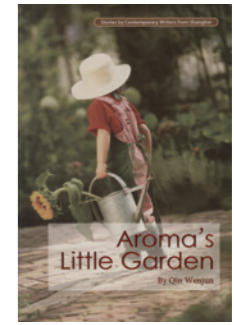
The 10001 Reasons to Live
collection of essays
traditional Chinese
Peace Book Co., Ltd., Hong
Kong, 2005



**Jia Li in Junior High: A
New Biography**
novel
Korean
Borim Press, Korea, 2012



Jia Mei in Junior High
novel
Korean
Changbi Publishers, Inc.,
Korea, 2013



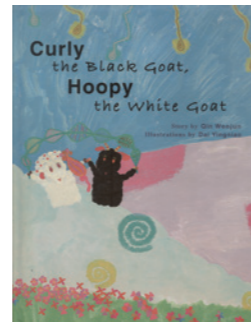
Aroma's Little Garden
collection of novellas
English
Better Link Press, U.S.A., 2016



Smiling Kala Kela
picture book
English
Long River Press, U.S.A., 2005



3 Tian Tang Street
novel
English
Long River Press, U.S.A., 2005



**Curly the Black Goat,
Hoopy the White Goat**
picture book
English
Long River Press, U.S.A., 2006



Prince's Long Night
fantasy novel
Korean
Hye Kang Publishing House,
Korea



Prince's Long Night
fantasy novel
Sinhalese
Neptune Publications (Pvt)
Ltd., Sri Lanka



Prince's Wonderland
fantasy novel
Korean
Hye Kang Publishing House,
Korea



**Jia Li in Junior High: A
New Biography**
novel
traditional Chinese
Cotton Tree Publishing Ltd.,
Hong Kong, 2007



**Jia Mei in Junior High: A
New Biography**
novel
traditional Chinese
Cotton Tree Publishing Ltd.,
Hong Kong, 2007



Jia Li in Junior High
novel
Korean
Borim Press, Korea, 2012



Prince's Wonderland
fantasy novel
Sinhalese
Neptune Publications (Pvt)
Ltd., Sri Lanka



Prince's Secret Messenger
fantasy novel
Korean
Hye Kang Publishing House,
Korea



Prince's Secret Messenger
fantasy novel
Sinhalese
Neptune Publications (Pvt)
Ltd., Sri Lanka

Appreciative Essays, Interviews or Articles

Qin Wenjun has been vigorously engaged in literary creation for 30 years. During the past 30 years, she shaped tens of thousands of readers as well as herself. She has created many literary characters for Chinese readers. Meanwhile, she has built herself into a kind and elegant “Qin Wenjun.”

She is a writer who has made significant contributions to the history of children’s literature in China. It seems that since her first day to write, she has been linked with the history of children’s literature in China.

There are two kinds of writers. For the first kind, they always write ahead of others. For the second kind, they write after others. We need the two kinds of writers. The two kinds of writers develop a pattern – a literary pattern. Qin Wenjun belongs to the first kind.

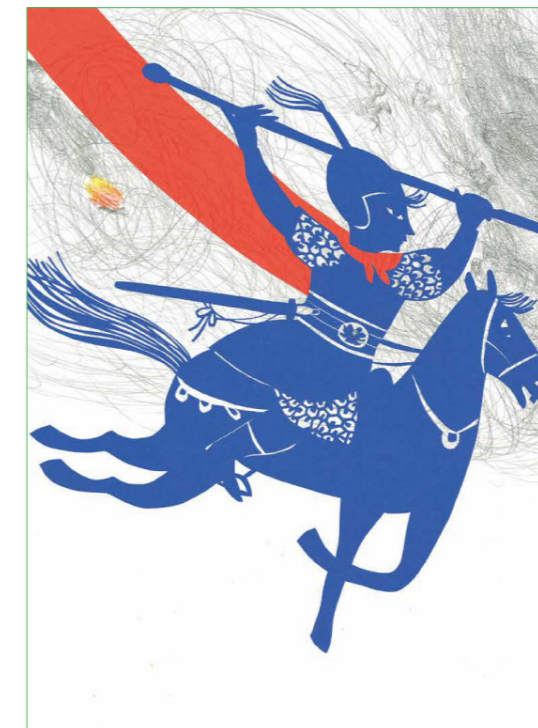
For the past 30 years, she has always been a mark, a high point, and a symbol in children’s literature in China. With her mature works, she offers a normal form and a reference to children’s literature in China. Most of her works have become the text imitated and referred by later ones. In addition to books, she has brought quality, styles, views and new ways for children’s literature in China.

I am an “old-fashioned” person in terms of literature view. I prefer to accept the definition of novels in the era of Chekov: Novels are about writing for people and about for portraying characters. To this day, I still take portraying characters as the criterion of first-class novels. I prefer to trust in ancient criterion. I doubt about modern criterions that are seemed to be profound theories and elaborations of great value. Many modern criterions are unreliable. Many people suffer losses because they trust in modern criterions completely. However, Qin Wenjun has always followed the basic criterion of portraying characters. Qin Wenjun once said that writing is a thing of great value and this thing will become more interesting if the characters are vivid enough. These characters are vivid enough to her as well as to us. These characters have brought us enjoyment. Characters such as Jia Li, Jia Mei and Cluckie the little girl are of great value.

Actually, Qin Wenjun also created a kind of humor for children’s literature in China. For Qin Wenjun, humor is no realm – the wisdom revealed by humor can be regarded as the realm. The real humor must be generated from a heart of wisdom. Qin Wenjun is full of wisdom. She penetrates her wisdom into her behaviors and writing. With such a lofty realm in her behaviors and writing, she deserves appreciation and admiration.

In her solemn yet humorous narration, she always adheres to the fundamentals and basic spirit of literature. She is a trend-setting writer who is not conservative and has spiritual freedom. Meanwhile, she is a writer with persistence, expectation and principle. Qin Wenjun is neither humble nor pushy in a commercialized context; she deeply respects her cause and earnestly writes books; and she extends her love and sincerity to readers. But few writers can do these things like her. In addition, she is always diligent. Thanks to all her valuable qualities, she has been deeply loved by many readers, and rich spiritual wealth has been left to children’s literature in China.

— **Cao Wenxuan (2012, Beijing) ,
the 2016 H.C.A. Award winner**



A Selected Illustration from Qin's Books

List of the Books Sent to the Jurors

Jia Li in Junior High



1997, *Jia Li in Junior High*, novel, Shanghai Juvenile & Children's Publishing House

Jia Li was a quick-witted, lively boy that had a lot of ideas, some of which were really brilliant, some trouble-making. Every chapter in the book began with an excerpt from his diary, in which Li murmured his still naive, but maturing understanding of mankind, for example, his thoughts on the world peace.

Li had a somewhat special family. His father pampered Mei, Li's twin sister, while being both affectionate and strict toward Li. Father appeared highly sensitive to Li's trivial misbehaviors, even keeping a log of them, such as "Li liked tapping a stick everywhere when he was a toddler". Li wanted to prove himself and gain the recognition of Father. Although the moody Mei was nice to Li sometimes and mean to him sometimes, he was always a loving, responsible elder brother. He often wanted to help Mei out, but ended up as a joke instead. It was because of Mei that Li later discovered how important he was to Father.

Jia Li in Junior High provided a humorous account of bitter-sweet adolescence. Because of their rich, deep meaning, some chapters, for instance, The Election Scandal and Birthday Party, would arouse mixed feelings and long, lingering aftertastes. In some amusing chapters such as The Three Musketeers and The Cost of Risk Taking, there were harshness of life and embarrassment peculiar to adolescence.

Jia Li in Junior High became a national phenomenon among readers and critics. The novel led Chinese juvenile literature in the 1990s to focus on children's emotions and mirror their feelings and thinking. It also demonstrated that juvenile literature of high quality could also become a bestseller. The importance of the book extended beyond its literary merit: under the decades-long one-child policy in China, children grew up without siblings and were prone to be self-centered due to the absolute attention of their parents and grandparents. *Jia Li in Junior High* evoked warmth in family life and called for empathy in youngsters.

3 Tian Tang Street



2005, *3 Tian Tang Street*, novel, Shanghai Juvenile & Children's Publishing House

In an old house in Shanghai that survived World War II lived Lang Lang, a teenage boy, and four women, namely his mother, his maternal grandmother, and his two great aunts, one of who was never married. Because of Grandma's snobbish attitude, Lang's father had been separated from the family for many years, leaving Lang to grow up in a matriarchy. Lang battled against adolescent anxiety while trying to protect his beautiful, fragile mother, who had a suitor, Elder Uncle Chai. Lang was estranged from Grandma, but he still obeyed her. He felt close to Elder Uncle Chai, but he appeared aloof for fear that his father would be replaced by Elder Uncle Chai. He was disgusted by and afraid of Kao, the school bully, but he also admired Kao for the latter's strength and masculinity. One day, Lang encountered Wei Xie, a frail boy that had similar experiences...

In *3 Tian Tang Street*, renowned author Qin Wenjun vividly depicted modern life in the historic lanes of Shanghai. In the house that Grandma inherited from her parents, she kept many secrets and struggled to carry on the elegant, almost ritual lifestyle. Every detail is described so picturesquely, full of customs and traditions of the old Shanghai. The fascinating but suffocating family life shadowed Lang and his friends while the intriguing, narrow streets witnessed their search for happiness and identity.





Aroma's Little Garden



2016, *Aroma's Little Garden*, novel, Tomorrow Publishing House

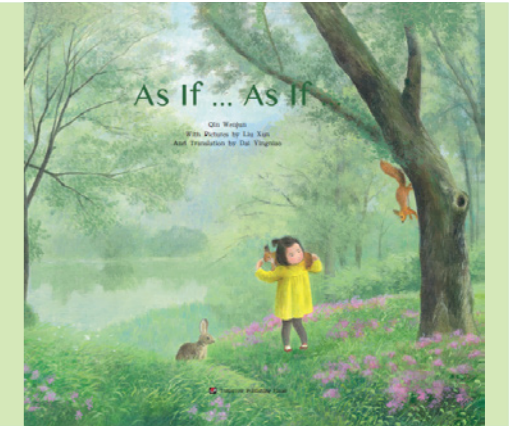
Aroma's Little Garden, based on Qin Wenjun's childhood memories, consists of three novellas.

Aroma Is Not a Stupid Girl portrayed Aroma as an imaginative little girl. She was so curious about Nature that she was always trying to unveil the unknown. Auntie Mai, her conventional nurse, shrugged at her efforts, believing that knowing the reality would do no good to girls. Auntie Mai wanted her to be like other children and not a "wild child". Nevertheless, Aroma still explored the world in her own way: she went to the Concert of Raindrops of the miserable Mr. Wood and could barely wait to smell the whales in the ocean...

In ***The Princess in Her Little Garden***, Aroma planted and tended a sunflower in her garden. She found that the flower would dance in the sun, but nobody really believed her. Not her schoolmates and not the neighbors. This caused her unexpected troubles at school. How can Aroma grapple with these problems and retain her pride? The story, with its real-life, worldly Chinese setting, presented a diverse children's "miniature society".

My Father with a Heart of Stone told the story of Aroma's father, an ex-army officer from a mountain village in the north of China. He fell in love with Aroma's mother and stayed in Shanghai. However, he found it hard to get used to the lifestyle of metropolitans, especially that of his mother-in-law. For the arrogant, elegant Granny, even a fried egg was a work of art worthy of careful preparation. Mother spoke Shanghai dialect with superiority of city dwellers. Father, who enjoyed gardening and solitude, protested by refusing to learn Shanghai dialect and resorting to hand gestures when talking...Could the mysterious Father of high self-esteem deal with culture differences? In this story, Qin drew on her upbringing and reflected on how people of different walks of life understood and sympathized with each other.

As If... As If...



2015, *As If...As If...*, picture book, Tomorrow Publishing House

As If...As If... is known as a picture book of aesthetic pleasure and charming imagination. The author Qin Wenjun uses her enthusiastic fancy to record the precious feelings that little children cannot describe and adults cannot remember. Published in 2015, the book has already won numerous awards and honors.

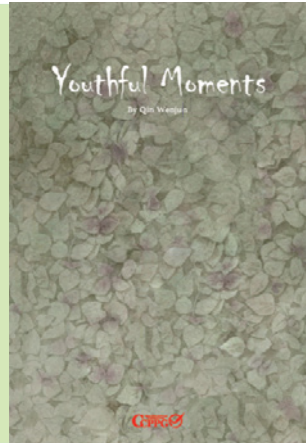
A little girl, with little red shoes on, strolls alone into the garden after the rain. The veil of mysterious Mother Nature is gradually lifted, revealing the breathtaking beauty. Everything after the rain has inspired the little girl to feel as if...as if...

A little fern-green dragonfly rests on the little girls' finger, as if he were a magic ring that enabled her to make friends with insects and persuaded her to wait like a patient raccoon for the last star to show up...

As If...As If... is like a landscape painting, so tranquil, so delightful, or a symphony, with oboes playing the desolate parts, flutes the joyful parts, and cellos the gracefully complicated parts with a light touch of sadness.

As If...As If... is best enjoyed at peaceful moments of mind, such as on a quiet night or on an afternoon after the rain. With her poetic writing and creative power, Qin Wenjun expands the horizon of Chinese picture books and makes ***As If...As If...*** stand out from myriads of books for preschoolers.





Youthful Moments



2017, *Youthful Moments*, novel, published by China Children's Press & Publication Group

The past was buried in time but it would not disappear without a trace.

In 1988, Qin Wenjun, a victim of China's Cultural Revolution, wrote *Dear 16-Year-Old Me: Up to the Mountains in Northeast China*, sharing her joys and tears as a innocent city girl exiled to northern forest during the political turmoil and cultural catastrophe. Almost 30 years later, she finished *Youthful Moments*, a Bildungsroman about Li Weiyi, a boy that lived in Shanghai and witnessed the political darkness.

Weiyi, a role model in class, was restless in heart. He protested at the cruelty and unfairness of the political sycophants that took over his school. However, the boy still chose to yield sometimes and tolerate humiliation so as to protect his friends from further harms. The author made a beautiful, detailed record of Weiyi's mental and emotional maturation in the chaotic years, as well as his budding romances. Qin also provided a panoramic view of Shanghai and examined how boys and men at that time judged their opposite gender.

Youthful Moments was imbued with Qin's real experience in and distinctive memories of the Cultural Revolution. The book presented a graphic account of the city life in the 1960s: Master Bai celebrated his 60th birthday with a "one-hundred-chicken feast"; people lined up in front of the public toilet, with newspapers in hand; at midnight, the boys sneaked out for adventures in the food market; the sentimental Weiyi had a crush on Zhang Liang, a pretty girl whom he could never fully know, and such mystery fueled his youthful adoration...

Qin's rich and vivid language added to charms of her accurate depiction of the history and the customs of Shanghai. The novel, published on Harvest Magazine, a prestigious literary journal, received huge critical acclaim for the brand-new aesthetic pleasures it offered and the forever-shining humanity it revealed.



Hua Mulan



2017, *Hua Mulan*, picture book, published by China Children's Press & Publication Group

Mulan was a legendary woman warrior of ancient China. Her name, toughness, and free spirit were passed on from one generation to another even in time of male dominance. There were countless retellings of her story. Qin Wenjun explored the possibilities in Mulan's peaceful childhood in her home village and stormy adolescence during wartime. Qin looked for inspirations in the deserts and old battlefields. She stood in the wilderness for hours, staring at moving shadows of birds and floating cirrus clouds, as Mulan might have done more than 15 centuries ago.

The picture book took the form of a story within a story. A modern Chinese girl dreamed of Mulan, a coming-of-age girl disguised as a man, fighting in place of her old, weak father and protecting her homeland from invaders. From the viewpoint of the modern girl, Mulan's sweet nature could never be eroded by brutal warfare. The dramatic story set in magnificent landscape predicted that Mulan would follow her heart and pursue a beautiful life afterwards. *Hua Mulan* discussed how today's women should look upon themselves in the presence of glass-ceilings.

The author Qin Wenjun, based in China, and the illustrator Yu Rong, based in U.K., spent a lot of time working together on this project over the Internet. Qin told Yu a secret and asked Yu to hide it in the pictures for the readers to discover. Qin also suggested that Yu portray her as "Mulan in her sixties".



Reviews of the Books Submitted to the Jury

Qin Wenjun: Regression or Transcendence

--From *Jia Li in Junior High* to *Diary of Jia Li in Junior High*

By Li Xuebin, Associate Professor of Shanghai Normal University and Critic

In the 1980s, Chinese children's literature experienced a 10-year "Art-oriented Revolution" movement like a raging fire. Thereafter, it ushered in the first golden period of "Quality Authenticity". Chinese children's literature began to concentrate on all kinds of art attempts in the field of children's literature, and unfolded such a set of coordinates: Meet the aesthetical demands of all levels of the child readers, but do not lose literariness at the same time.

Here, Qin Wenjun's *Jia Li in Junior High* series sounded the first signs doubtlessly, and also became model works of Chinese children's literature of that period.

As Qin Wenjun's "Jia Li and Jia Mei" series of novel, *Jia Li in Junior High* was published in the *The Literary Giants* in 1991 at first. At the beginning, because its contents are buoyant, fluent, humorous and dynamic, and its writing techniques have a "sense of strangeness", the circle of children's literature fell into an "aphasia" and "silence" state for a time. It was not until several years later when that it won the highest award in domestic children's literature world -- the "National Outstanding Children's Literature Award" that its shining splendor began to attract people's eyes. Thereafter, different kinds of honor and favorable comments came one after another. In a short period of several years, *Jia Li in Junior High* and its sister works won all kinds of awards for children's literature in China, and they also set a series of "dazzling" records in relation to the readers...

Yet, from today's viewpoint after the 10 years, when we look back to that period of history of children's literature, we have suddenly found: The appearance of *Jia Li in Junior High*

and its later series in the children's literature of the present age was never accidental. It was closely related to the then social and cultural background.

Actually, from the late stage of the 1980s, owing to the structural readjustment of the entire sociopolitical ideology and the infiltration of the concept of the market economy, the contemporary literature was losing its stirring effect as it used to have in the 1980s. In the writing style, the mainstream children's literature was breaking away from the reading expectation of the youngsters increasingly, and one of the major causes was the general lack of the gaming spirit in the works of children's literature. Just in that period, Qin Wenjun used her *Jia Li in Junior High* series full of lightness, humor, wit and dynamic sense to sound the prelude for Chinese children's literature to march into the new century. Thereafter, hosts of excellent works of children's literature came into the world one after another. Thus, Chinese children's literature of the present age reached its most pleasant stage gradually at the end of the 20th century...

By further analysis, we have found: the success of *Jia Li in Junior High* as a hallmark in children's literature of China in the new period, is chiefly a success of the concept transformation. The "taking children as the standard" and "taking youngsters as the standard" principle always held by Qin Wenjun in her writing are her talismans for success. Such talismans make her works have an instinctive intimacy to child readers. And it is also what many works of children's literature before lacked.

In *Jia Li in Junior High* series, whether Jia Li and Jia Mei,

or their partners and schoolmates Lu Zhisheng, Chen Yingda, Lin Xiaomei, Liu Geshi, Zhang Xiaosa, etc, all of them are alive and kicking, not reduced adults and the children in the writers' philosophy. This point is of crucial importance. That benefits from Qin Wenjun's skillful mastery of the living state of the youngsters of the present age, and her high art grasping power on that basis. In Qin Wenjun's own words, these personages "... have already broken away from the life prototype, being products of imagination and creation. The school yard life in the novel is also a highly generalized and poetically treated picture distinct from the real school yard life."

Besides, another great talisman for the success of *Jia Li in Junior High* is that the writer does not give up the story and is good at building up a light and humorous atmosphere. In *Jia Li in Junior High*, as a first-year pupil of junior middle school, Jia Li is "too self-confident". He feels proud of his intelligence quotient, often plays some petty tricks, but the final result is often overshooting himself: he was bent upon cultivating little sister Jia Mei into a dancer, but the result was her failure in her performance; he wanted to help his buddy Lu Zhisheng to quit smoking, but actually it led to the mischief of hiding a firecracker in the cigarette; he was resentful to his teacher, so, he used a trick to steal something from him; he wished to be a "hero", but unexpectedly he met with a "pillaging" himself... In short, he played various tricks, had strange ideas one after another, showing a limitless vitality. Hence, Qin Wenjun has created a vivid first-year middle school pupil image that is bold, self-willed, whimsical, but at the same time also sensitive and delicate, kind-hearted, and quick to correct his own mistakes. The scenario is full of tactile sensation of life, the details reveal a childhood flavor, the images are humorous and implied, and the language is full of imagination and creation... The writing is rich but also light, making people enjoy to their hearts' content and unable to help laughing. After reading, we may trigger a lot of thinking, enjoying the long aftertaste.

The tale is an "enchanter's hat" from beginning to end. By its witchcraft, it always builds up a mysterious and invincible "magnetic field" in a casual manner. Qin Wenjun knows this trick deeply. In *Jia Li in Junior High*, she grasps this "magic wand" tightly, namely, the "tale", and waves it lightly, thus, she changes the ordinary into wonderful, turning out all kinds of things continuously, such as the inspiration and wisdom in growth of life, the elegance and poetry in the journey of human life...

The success of the "Jia Li" series is never accidental. It is a result of Qin Wenjun's long-term efforts in the field of children's literature. The appearance of "Jia Li" and "Jia Mei"

marked a level Qin Wenjun has reached in her creation of children's literature. More than that, the narrating manner started by *Jia Li in Junior High* series for children's literature of the present age also marks a height reached by the "gaming spirit" of the children's novels at the end of the century. In this connection, I quite agree with the judgment by Mr. Zhou Xiao, an old-generation critic of children's literature: "Humor and theatricality did not begin from Qin Wenjun, but the humorous and comic creation of our children's literature has become a fashion because of Qin Wenjun, and she has pushed it ahead by a great step."

In comparison with the lightness, humorousness, simplicity and dynamic sense of *Jia Li in Junior High*, its sister novel *Diary of Jia Li in Junior High* has some "variation" in a good many aspects. Above all, it is the writing technique. Although both use the fictitious "diary" as the intervention form, the proportion and function of the "diary" in *Diary of Jia Li in Junior High* are obviously greater than in *Jia Li in Junior High*. If we say, in *Jia Li in Junior High*, the "diary" before the beginning of each paragraph only serves as a "seed", then, the later series stories are the gorgeous flowers resulting from it gradually; then, we can say, the "diary" in *Diary of Jia Li in Junior High* is a door, and by crossing it, we can go in a zigzag way to the inner emotional world of the youngsters. Therefore, different from the single-line progressing structure like "candied haws on a stick" in *Jia Li in Junior High*, *Diary of Jia Li in Junior High* adopts a "double-line concurrent progressing" composite structure: the diary narrates Jia Li's inner mind activities and his future plan; the "tale" after the diary turns out his behavior, "externalizing" his inner mind. Judging from this viewpoint, the "diary" is Jia Li's spiritual life, whereas the "tale" is the realistic portraiture of his growth.

Then, judging from the specific text effect, in comparison with *Jia Li in Junior High*, *Diary of Jia Li in Junior High* has a larger life space, its personage relationship is more complicated, the spiritual experience is more subtle, and the emotional implications are more profound. Unconsciously, Qin Wenjun has thinned the humorous atmosphere of the "light comedy", but strengthened the profundity of "youth sentiment perspective". Such an aesthetical tendency has "discarded" the "gaming effect" of "lightness", "fluency", "humorousness" and "dynamic feeling" in *Jia Li in Junior High* unintentionally while "continuing" the writing style of "elegance, implication, romance and lyricism" started up by the writer in her earlier works such as *A Farewell to Yi Fan*, *Longing to See Mi Nan*, *Dear 16-Year-Old Me: Up to the Mountains in Northeast China*, etc. From this sense, I think, to Qin Wenjun, the significance of *Diary of Jia Li in Junior High* is dual: it is both a "regression" and a "transcendence".

Where Is Paradise After All?

By Zhu Ziqiang

Zhu Ziqiang is a famous literary critic and Professor of Chinese Children's Literature at Ocean University of China.

"On this day, too many things happened, just like the 17th tree, with so many branches and tendrils stretching out everywhere."

That is a sentence in the beginning part of **3 Tian Tang Street** after describing the one-day experience of the three youngsters, Lang Lang, Wei Xie and Silin Lang. When I read it for the first time, I did not care about this sentence too much. Yet, when I read it for the second time (only good novels can stand up to the second reading, and can give you more and more artistic information), I suddenly found: in the description of "this day", there are so many foreshadowing and implications. Almost all the important plots coming out later in the novel stem from "this day".

Again, I admire the power of Qin Wenjun as a novelist. Frankly speaking, there are not many people having such a power among the writers of novels for youngsters. A novel, especially a novel written for youngsters, if its beginning is written like "branches and tendrils spreading out everywhere", the entire work might become straggly clusters of weed trees. Yet, Qin Wenjun has gathered all the branches and tendrils stretching everywhere into a dancing great tree, just like the 17th oriental plane "so flourishing" in Pingjili. What does she rely on? It is the powerful root trunk, namely, the "growth" of youngsters.

In childhood, the life problem encountered by children that are the most difficult but also the most important to their growth, is the problem of "self-identity". The so-called "self-identity", is, in a simple saying, "I am I". If a youngster is frustrated in establishing his "self-identity", he might fall into "passive identity" easily. Hence, growth has become one of the hardest things in human life. The literature on growth is a very difficult literature, because, the generalization and popularization of psychological concepts such as growth and self-awareness may easily make the writers lacking real understanding of individual souls lose their individualized features in their writing. Whether we can find the functional scenario with individual unique features in describing youngsters' common psychological behavior of establishing their

self-awareness, is the key to success of literature on growth. In **3 Tian Tang Street**, Qin Wenjun's talent in establishment and unfolding of functional scenarios with unique features is very praise-worthy.

In the growing process of individual youngsters, there are often some important chances. Qin Wenjun knows this point deeply. When she wrote **3 Tian Tang Street**, she seized the chances in the youngsters' life, designed them into dynamic plots, and gave them a unique form of unfolding. In the life of Wei Xie and Lang Lang, the novel has arranged some "props" with the nature of power supply, such as the telescope, the finger ring, and "3 Tian Tang Street" postbox. It is just from the series of events derived by these props that the youngsters have drawn nourishment for their soul growth.

Although the narration viewing angle of the novel takes Lang Lang as the center, Wei Xie is obviously the most powerful personage described in the story. When Wei Xie was small, his dad abandoned him and his mom, and the telescope left by his dad became the rare object for maintaining his relationship with his dad. The telescope has the function to pull a faraway object to his nearby area, and make a distant and even unknown thing become something which can be seen clearly, and this function has formed an intrinsic connection with his thirst for and seeking of the paternal love. In the novel, it is just through this telescope that Wei Xie found back his father, and found Lang Lang, his friend. Because he has found back his father, he "has become bolder in talking and wiser in doing things." The marking event of his changing from "a cowardly" boy into an "indefatigable" boy is his revolt against the hooligan Kao who bullied him. The cause was that Kao had taken away his telescope and profaned it.

Just as the significance of the telescope is to Wei Xie, the finger ring sent by papa to mom but not accepted by grandmas, also has the nature and value of an "empathy object" as far as Lang Lang is concerned. Lang Lang tried very hard to preserve this finger ring, because "after papa was gone, it became a keepsake, witnessing

the intercourse between the father and son". When the finger ring was lost, Lang Lang "had a knot of worry in his heart, as though the lost finger ring was like the loosened hand, and he could not feel his dad again".

The finger ring reflects the special relationship of Lang Lang's family: The grandmas controlling the marriage of Lang Lang's mother who lacked her own identity awareness rejected Lang Lang's father, and welcomed Uncle Chai who liked Lang Lang's mother. Between papa and Uncle Chai (Lang Lang also liked him though), Lang Lang took out papa's finger ring at the critical time and chose his papa, so, he maintained his papa's position in the family. In the process of establishment of self personality of youngsters, the environment and other people are very important. Among the other people, papa and mom's influence is especially important. Just as what happened in Wei Xie, Lang Lang's maintenance of his relationship with his father through the finger ring is also a form of self maintenance. Lang Lang's fear to forget and lose his papa, in fact, also implies his fear of self loss.

In the setting of the plot of "3 Tian Tang Street" postbox, according to my guess, Qin Wenjun got the help from God. The setting of this plot which can be said to be the finishing touch of the novel, proves the extraordinary imaginative power of Qin Wenjun as a novelist. It is not a small wit, but a great wisdom."3 Tian Tang Street" postbox has turned **3 Tian Tang Street** into a novel on growth with deep implied meanings.

Just when Lang Lang's father was forced by the grandmas to leave without saying goodbye and Uncle Chai's courting of his mother was very hot, Lang Lang got a short letter which read like a cant: "When papa is absent, if a man comes to give you a gift, be careful." The sender of the letter sent not via the post office was written like this: "3 Paradise Street". This city did not have a "Paradise Street", but only had "Tian Tang Street" (Note: In Chinese, "Paradise" is also pronounced as "Tian Tang").

Lang Lang tried his best to seek Paradise Street, and finally he really found "3 Paradise Street" postbox in 3 Tian Tang Street. "Why was it called 'Paradise Street' ?

It should be Tian Tang Street. " Afterwards Lang Lang understood at last: It was the postbox of Wei Xie's family. Wei Xie told Lang Lang: "When I wrote those characters, I was only 6, and I just wrote in that way by chance. My mom said 'it is OK, too. This kid has got too little warmth

from the human world, just let Heaven drop more warmth to him!" When I read here, I felt a great heat suddenly, and felt I had touched the fundamental motive of Qin Wenjun's writing of this novel.

When he opened it for the first time, "The little postbox had nothing in it, the bottom of the box was flat, just like the loosened and empty palm of a person. Lang Lang thought for a moment, and then fished out the slip with an address from his trousers pocket (the slip was the tie for him to maintain his relationship with his papa, and that address was equal to the girl he liked, Su Feng. — Note by the author), and put it into the postbox. The postbox should not be empty. Just like a person's heart, we must put something into it anyhow." Later, Lang Lang sent a letter to "3 Paradise Street" postbox. When he opened the postbox again, he really saw this letter. "He put the letter onto the bottom of the postbox, saw it stayed there for while, and then took it out again. At last, he had got his own place, that is, '3 Paradise Street' where no one else could stretch a hand in."

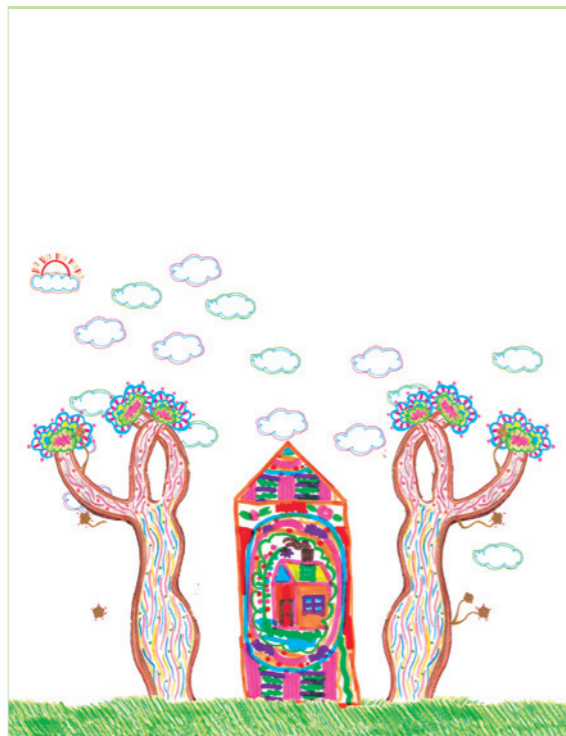


Always Exploring into the Soul of Children

--A Talk on Qin Wenjun's New Work *3 Tian Tang Street*

By Shu Peide

Shu Peide is a well-known critic of children's literature.



A Selected Illustration from Qin's Books

3 Tian Tang Street is a new harvest and new fruit in the garden of children's literature of China at the beginning of the new century.

What is most important for literature and art is innovation. Without original creation, without innovation, it will be impossible for literature and art to advance and it will lose its proper charm. Qin Wenjun is a writer rich in love, sense of duty, and the spirit of continual exploring and innovating. She stresses opening up the eye reach of art and seeking unique viewing angles. Her works depend on story-telling, interest and nimbus for success. From the postbox of "3 Tian Tang Street" hanging on the door, a finger ring with an inlaid sapphire always in Lang Lang's trousers pocket, a Russian military telescope always hanging on Wei Xie's neck... She has developed a series of fascinating and moving stories.

This novel pays more attention to digging up the different kinds of emotion of relationship implied in the story: The thick and inseparable blood relationship; the simple, sincere and righteous friendship among youngsters; the adults' love with warmth, pains and expectation interwoven together. She describes those kinds of emotion common to mankind, in a free and lively way. All those can be sensed by the soul of children. Thus, her novel has got deeper cultural connotations.

Walking into the inner spiritual world and emotional world of teenagers is Qin Wenjun's goal in her personage characterization. We can say, she has become extremely familiar with the living condition and psychological condition of urban youngsters of the present age, such as their joys, agonies, puzzles, expectations, etc.

From this new work **3 Tian Tang Street**, we can also see: she has employed another wealth in her own life stock, namely, the daily life of the common people in the lanes of Shanghai which was very familiar to her from childhood. Her touch stretches more into the colorful family

life, making her description by crossing the campus life, family life and social life. In the small three-stored house at Pingjili, the grandma, the little grandma, the tiny grandma, Fu Xiaofu, the mom of Lang Lang, and Uncle Chai... Their talking and laughing, food and drink, clothes and ornaments, vicissitudes of life, birth, aging, falling ill and death, from all kinds of dish on the old fashioned square table, to the intercourse of the relatives and friends, from the chattering of the three old ladies to the short temper of the little grandma... Everything is described so vividly, full of the flavor and air of the old Shanghai. And all the descriptions of the family life and adulthood life are closely linked to the youngsters' living and growing environment, and their process of spiritual growth and soul growth, letting us see clearly the hardships and pains in the growing process of the youngsters, and taste all the sweet and bitter experiences of the children. Her humorous tone is mixed with a thin dolor.

I think, Qin Wenjun's explorations in those aspects are successful. For all her explorations in literature and art, she never forgets the fundamental, which is, walking into the soul of children.



The Sweet Stupid Child

Reviewed by Dai Yingniao

Dai Yingniao is a writer and illustrator of children's literature. She is also a PhD Candidate in Finance.

From the perspective of natural age, Qin Wenjun is 50 years away from her childhood.

But she was born to be a writer in children's literature. She loves writing and she writes day and night. She has led a full life, experiencing all sorts of things. But she remains her original intention as well as childhood memory. She can be still moved by the bright moon, she can still feel the childhood sweetness, and she can still experience nature whole-heartedly.

She was born in Shanghai. She hasn't been to other cities until she was ten years old. All her love is given to the city, to the thick cloud rolling between two houses outside the window, to her family members and friends accompanying and protecting her, and also to tramcars in front of the alleyway. She likes to dream. When she was young, she along with her mom could take the tramcar at nightfall in the old Shanghai. They were in a daze. It was like a dream and yet it is not a dream. It seemed that they were floating on the sea.

She has an unusual growth course composed of fear, upset, pain and guess of her story. It was especially hard for her when she was a fourth grade student. Due to the Great Cultural Revolution at that time, her family was compromised. At the age of sixteen and a half, she was sent to cut trees as an educated youth in the forest region in Heilongjiang Province, a place far away from her home. Hardship could be treasure for a writer. I like reading **Dear 16-Year-Old Me: Up to the Mountains in Northeast China**, a novel telling the life story of a young girl. I always place it beside my pillow. Every time I read it, I can be moved by its beauty. And I like reading **Youthful Moments**, a novel recently finished by her. Actually, the historical background of the two novels is in the Great Cultural Revolution period in China. When writing these novels, she needs courage and resourcefulness to get involved in and analyze this special, even "forbidden" era. Her strokes are powerful, bringing a strong sense of pictures. With solid ability to

write realistically, she offers a portrait of the main characters of the era, discovers young people's growth path in various social environments, and explores humanity. As a result, beauty comes into being in the story.

Few works are targeted little children in her early 20 years of writing. In the last more than a decade, she broadened the literary boundary in writing and wrote some books targeting little children. Take **Aroma's Little Garden** for example, it is a book targeting little children. It includes three novelettes: **Aroma Is Not a Stupid Girl**, **The Princess in Her Little Garden**, and **My Father with a Heart of Stone**. Aroma is an unusual girl. She believes that animals can understand what she says. So she often says hello to birds and talks with grasshoppers. She is curious about all things. She finds that the pink grasshopper likes flowers and the green grasshopper likes grass. At night, she puts dragonflies into her bed net, to observe how they fly. She finds that dragonflies are different in characteristics – some are impatient, while others are patient.



Aroma Is Not a Stupid Girl is really good. It seems that Qin Wenjun uses no writing skills, but readers can feel the natural emotion. The words in it appear to be "literary pearls."

The Princess in Her Little Garden, shows pure emotion and clear strokes, just as critic Liu Xuyuan says, "It is full of interesting details, which form a long river and lead you to enjoy the journey of reading." Aroma keeps cool whether she is satisfied or disappointed. She leads a poetic life, owns a peaceful heart, and has many sincere feelings that have been lost by human.

My Father with a Heart of Stone is about love and memory. It shows subtle angle of view as well as sensitive gloomy mood. It also shows the deep love and emotional dependence for her family members. And it shows unclear unexplainable melancholy. All these things fit in with the mind of the girl at this age.

Three novelettes of **Aroma's Little Garden** draw the inspiration from love, showing the love to this world, the pure sentimental moods, and the protection of childhood nature. A large number of writers take childhood as their theme, but few of them can create these books that are full of childhood calmness, fun, beauty and loneliness. It needs literary temperament and innate skill. Writers who hear sounds of nature can bear the mission to represent and defend the magnificent childhood spirit.

From my point of view, with her spirit of exploration as well as her profound observation of children nature and meticulous care, Qin Wenjun has created many classic books in the contemporary children's literature, such as **Aroma's Little Garden**.



Qin Wenjun – Sunflowers Should Be Allowed to Dance as They Like

March 22, 2012/ Literature Press

by Fang Weiping

Fang Weiping is a renowned literary critic and Professor of Chinese Literature at Zhejiang Normal University.

Qin Wenjun is a diligent writer. Since the early 1980s, she has been engaged in writing for her beloved young people. Her type of works includes novel, novella, short story and essay. Transition of creating can be seen in Qin Wenjun's works – from a hazy, pure, sensitive style like **Dear 16-Year-Old Me: Up to the Mountains in Northeast China** through a deep-in-the-heart, readable style like *My Little Brother's Green Manor* to a slightly humorous style like "Jia Li" and "Jia Mei" series (Jia Li and Jia Mei are two figures deeply loved by young readers in the early 1990s).

Since the early 21st century, Qin Wenjun has shifted her focus onto younger children. In her previous works, Qin Wenjun took teenage boys and girls as the leading characters. So it is a significant change. Take **Cluckie and Her Cousins** for example, it is a novel telling the life story of Cluckie and her three female cousins, whose age is between 6 or 7 to 13. It is more difficult for Qin Wenjun to write such a novel because she has to make the story and language suitable for the characteristics of each girl. It is Cluckie's sincerity and goodness, not talent, that moves us.

Qin Wenjun's novel named **The Dancing Sunflower** was published in 2008. The English edition--**Aroma's Little Garden** is an extension of *The Dancing Sunflower*. The three-novella *Aroma's Little Garden* tells childhood experiences that are closely related to Qin Wenjun. It seems that Qin Wenjun abandons the typical style of storytelling. She focuses on telling the life story of a little girl named Aroma and people surrounding her as well as the world moving slowly along the bank of the river of time. Recalling the joyfulness and sadness in her childhood, Qin Wenjun creates short stories using prose words. Some of these creations have the style of both short story and essay, such as **Sweetheart the Kitten**, **A Concert of Raindrops** and **At Sea**. These words have a narrative nature, giving a sense of flowing water. Through these words, readers can feel of charm of its language and plot as well as her childhood days full of boldness, sweetness and sigh. However, in addition to recalling her childhood, Qin Wenjun tells us using the story of Aroma that each sunflower in the childhood has its own style of dancing and they should be allowed to dance as they like!



Let Kids See Words and Conception of Static Beauty

--Reading As If...As If...

By Xu Lu

Xu Lu is a well-known writer, poet, and critic of children's literature.

There is a class of outstanding picture books in the world which do not necessarily employ story telling as their strength but present readers with a great deal of imagery, wisdom and sensation. One such example is *Who Is the World For?*, a collaborative work by British writer Tom Pow and Australian illustrator Robert Ingpen. Pow visited Africa at the age of 47. Standing on the vast land of Africa, he saw lions, zebras, insects and fish, galloping on grassland, buzzing in woods and thriving in water, having the same vital breath as mankind. This scene made him exclaim, "Who is the world for?" In the words of a lion speaking to his children, Pow tells the readers a truth, "This world has so many green grasslands for you to run and leap. Each zebra, antelope or elephant is helping you grow up healthily. Each rock, standing or flat, is enabling you to enjoy the sunshine. You should believe, the world is for you!"

Similarly, the lyrical picture book, **As if...As if...**, a collaborative work by Qin Wenjun and illustrator Liu Xun, is also a "philosophical picture book" emitting the light of wisdom of Mother Nature. It is fragrant with a poetic demeanor comparable to the beauty of *Who Is the World For?*. The writers never tell the complete story to the reader, yet each paragraph and each picture in the book presents numerous details of life as it exists in Mother Nature. In a setting after the rain, it depicts limitlessly vast and mighty scenes of Mother Nature, such as the moistening rainwater, curling clouds and mists, and verdant vegetation. Thus, sensing the common spirit of all things in the world, the reader can appreciate the relationship of mutual dependence among all segments of life.

For instance, "Drops of rain hang from branches, as if they were glamorous crystal icicles. One of them drips down and taps a snail on her shell. The snail, hiding in her cozy home, starts to panic, as if worrying: 'Is that a guest knocking at my door? I haven't washed my face yet! What shall I do now?'"

Here comes another example, "A lively lark has become a highly prolific calligrapher. He glides around and writes myriads

of words in the air. He keeps cheeping, as if explaining: 'My handwriting is not good, but I'm satisfied as long as it's legible!'"

Another interesting case is "A little squirrel sees the little girl with her little shoes on and tickles her little arm, as if asking: 'Do you have chewing gums? My hut is leaking, so I want to patch the hole. May I borrow a gum from you?'"

As another exemplar, "Every blade of grass is having a sweet dream. Their shadows connect and form a stripe waving up and down. The smallest blade bends down, as if praying: 'It has taken me so much time and energy to grow to this height. Pleaaase don't tramp me down!'"

As we closely pay attention to each pictorial detail through the winding white fog and bright dew along with dreamlike dialogues, we cannot help feeling a great gratitude, respect and praise for Mother Nature while standing in awe of the beauty of all natural things! We cannot but generate a warm sentiment for loving life, honoring life, valuing nature and being grateful to the universe.

Mother Nature is warm and just to each living being and tries its best to care for it. In the words of Qin Wenjun, "**As if...As if...** is a product of inspiration arising from an extremely quiet, light, free and slack mental state." Yes, all things in the universe possess a soul, and thus everything is so nice. "Whether a person's soul can fly or not has something to do with music, art and literature. If a kid gets nice and elegant literature in his childhood, his future choices will be sound and he will tend to seek brightness and nicety." Good books, such as **As if...As if...**, present to us a crisp, quiet, soft, vast and clear beauty, whether in words or drawings. It can bring about a yearning for nicety and brightness for the children. As the two writers are full of tender feminine feelings, intellectuality and love for Mother Nature, their work is rich in wisdom and full of flowery fragrances. Their work represent their desire to "let children see the words and conception of static beauty".

As if...As if... is a lyrical and philosophical picture book which brings about wonderful imagery, great wisdom and strong sensation.

Qin Wenjun's Picture Book: Life in Pictures and Words

By Zhao Xia

Zhao Xia is a Professor of Chinese Literature at Zhejiang Normal University.

The picture book is a collaborative effort by famous writer Qin Wenjun and a young talented painter. It traces out the microcosm of life in a set of pictures for the readers. Man and nature, fervency and tranquility, joy and pain... The writer-painter duo employs words and colors for setting up an ensemble comprising different stages of human life, allowing us to experience and appreciate the uniqueness of each stage while also recognizing the "life" collectively emerging out of their interaction and collision. After all, all things in the universe possess a soul.

The picture book titled *As if...As if...* takes us from a narrow edifice to the magnanimous expanse—from the "tiny" home of the ego to the "great" natural home. It depicts wonderful facets of the world and life through the portrayal of the sun, white clouds, raindrops, pear petals, willow leaves, mushrooms, earthworms, ants, ladybirds... It allows you to settle down in solitude, away from the din of life, and savor sunshine and trickling water, listen to a flower, observe a leaf's mood, and imagine the joy of a high-flying skylark. Through this sensory experience of tasting, listening and imagining, we feel to have melted into the composition of natural life. After all, all things in the universe possess a soul.

As far as children are concerned, it is an important classroom for life for them. The present times are characterized by a world of rigid and crowded utilitarian life that is increasingly isolating people from being intimate

with nature and its elements, such as the sun, earth and insects. Under such circumstances, it is becoming increasingly important for us to adopt a lifestyle that allows us to learn how to enjoy nature and interact with it. Arousing the children's emotions to get close to Mother Nature is just a starting point of this classroom on life.

In *As if...As if...*, the writer uses her beautiful essays full of puerility to laud the beauty and dignity of even the smallest of creatures. She goes on to write, "Each small blade of grass is enjoying its own dreams. The shadows of the grass blades linked together are moving up and down like a long dragon. The smallest blade of grass is bending its body, as if it praying, 'It has taken me so much pain to grow so high, please never tread me down!'"

"A ladybird with black dots in red background on its body has stopped on a red wild fruit, hugging the fruit tightly with its little legs, as if declaring, 'This ball is as red as me, and it is mine!'"

These transferences and imaginations full of childlike empathy uniquely show a deeper meaning of Wordsworth's saying: "Even the most lowly flower has its thought."

These transferences and imaginations full of childlike empathy uniquely show a deeper meaning of Wordsworth's saying: "Even the most lowly flower has its thought."



It is the sound of Mother Nature, and also the sound of our own soul. Esteem for all things in the universe, ranging from a small grass to a little flower, praise for the Creator's power and reverence for the universe's existence are all depictive of our understanding of the world and our attitude towards life. Moreover, the warm eye beam thrown at all natural things also comes ultimately from a purely kind, sensitive, poetic and rich soul. It is such a soul that enables us to fully realize the beauty of nature and human feelings in our life. It enables us to deeply understand the reason why Mr. Zhu Guangqian elaborated on a pitiful aspect of our lives, saying, "Many people are just living in the world of vehicles and horses coming back and forth, just like riding a car in the valleys of the Alps, darting past everything in a rush, without time to look back and enjoy the scenery. Thus, the rich and luxuriant world will become a lifeless prison. What a pity it is!" In the hustle and bustle of life, the ability to retain the knack for retrospection and enjoying natural things is a gift from life, manifesting as spiritual insight and growth.

As if...As if... uses pulsating and imaginative pictures in harmony with the imagery embedded in words, paving way for the emergence of colors and feelings full of dreamlike beauty. As the reader goes through the book page by page, one enjoys the experience of a group of landscape pictures of static beauty after rain.

The writer-painter duo uses an ensemble of words and colors to enable us to know, taste and appreciate the unique beauty of different fragments of human life, while experiencing the rich and profound connotations arising from their interaction and collision. I think that reading and accepting the beauty of life depicted by the words and colors is also a beauty in itself.

They Won't Be Cowed Down

By Li Weichang

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Li Weichang is an active literary critic and Editor-in-Chief of Zero, a literary journal for teenagers and young adults.

Youthful Moments is an intricate historical record of how people grow up. This novel ornately portrays Qin Wenjun's literary sentiment, life aspiration and historical attitude over the years. It acquaints us with a writer who is a class apart from regular children's novelists, presenting a first-rate novel which stands distinct from ordinary children's literature.

Qin Wenjun depicts the plight of youngsters in the period of "Cultural Revolution" in the 1970's—the era which defines the novel's complexity and richness. Besides presenting an objective description of the social environment, the novel raises some questions. If youngsters needed to be educated and their values nurtured, how could that turbulent era perform the social function of educating youngsters? How could we fight against the spread of evil? In a social state where it is easy for people to lose track, where could we get the power to make them stick to their virtues?

Qin Wenjun has explained growth from three aspects: physiological, psychological and social. Qin Wenjun has written about the love of a youngster named Weiyi, explaining a sentiment that is pure, insistent, selfless, introversive and meant to be yearned for. Qin Wenjun has also written about the tragedy of "young love". Weiyi loved a girl named Zhang Liang. However, her family was often bullied and suppressed because of the so-called "bad family background". The two had fallen in love with each other, but this love was so fragile that it could not withstand the storms outside. Zhang Liang needed a support to help her endure heavy rains and



harsh winds. However, young Weiyi was unable to play that role and Zhang Liang had to suffer a heavy blow from reality.

In comparison with the pubertal sentiment, the writer has paid more attention to psychological growth in the novel. Weiyi wanted to do a great deed. He wanted to help his classmate Lao Ba find his private diary with the cover of "New Song in the Battleground". Lao Ba did not tell him what he had written in it but said that they must find it as the analysis of the diary's contents could unveil some crimes. The plot has been skillfully weaved around the secret diary throughout the novel, effectively exhibiting the writer's acumen as a well-trained novelist. Centered on this quest, the novel assumes a more orderly structure as the writer goes on to further incorporate twists and turns in the plot. Treading on these lines, the novel goes on to unfurl other aspects of the youngster through the narration of events, such as catching the cricket and fighting for the toilet, etc. In order to get the information, he uses the "General" cricket for an exchange, an act which explains how youngsters use logic. The parts of the novel, such as the event of catching the cricket, are written in a light humored and mischievous tone, aptly reflecting the life of a youngster, who is innocent, vigorous and relentless in the face of a tense and choky atmosphere of the Cultural Revolution.

With regards to the social aspect of growth, Qin Wenjun has worked out admirable paragraphs. To celebrate his 60th birthday, Master Bai prepares a feast and invites his neighbors to dinner. Weiyi follows his mother for joining the feast and they are warmly welcomed by Master Bai's family. Master Bai is a craftsman, but he has made his trivial and downtrodden life somewhat interesting and colorful. At the birthday banquet, Weiyi is seized by Zhu, the "red rebel", because Weiyi had found the diary. Then, Master Bai's daughter-in-law comes out boldly, calling her companions to block Zhu. In these paragraphs, Qin Wenjun has showcased his exquisite writing skills and

ability to describe minute details through the usage of a compact structure, vivid and accurate language, a strong flavor of townfolk life and a sense of camera lens in storytelling. The wild expression from Master Bai to his daughter-in-law shows the townfolk everyday life that has broken away from the political atmosphere. The act of daughter-in-law dashing out boldly as a display of secular ethics and values is specially worth mentioning. Moreover, many teachers described in the novel managed to keep their dignity and righteousness intact, which is representative of a micro ethical ecology in the macro social background. This is where the just spirit and righteousness of the youngsters originated from. In comparison with the surging wheels of those times, it represents a slow and quietly flowing inner river of human life.

By the novel's end, Little Weiyi's growth was completed at last. With the passing away of the evil force and recovery of the secret diary, Lao Ba family's secret was also unveiled. The aftertaste left by the novel for the readers is obviously far from these. The growth shown in the novel will have a richer meaning if we say that Weiyi's growth lies in his realization that the world and human life have some worth and are worth struggling for, without being trapped by the past and other people. When the society shuns its responsibility of nurturing from the outside, who should take the task of working on the development of inner character and values of the young and the society at large? How can vices emerging out of an evil system be contained? How can we avoid the reappearance of inscrutable fiends, such as Zhu? Who can really punish them? Evil is not a thing of the past; it is a recurring phenomenon of the present which will keep on taking new forms forever, and there is no way of getting rid of it once and for all.

While Qin Wenjun pins hope on Weiyi for the power of justice, her writing and memory of common people, such as Lao Ba's grandfather and mother, Weiyi's parents, Master Bai and so on, depict the real source of goodness in humans, which is burning in people's hearts like a dark and never-failing tinder. This is where real hope lies. When Wang Jiansheng finally confessed that he was an arsonist instead of a fire-fighting hero and he was pulled to be paraded through the streets, Weiyi rushed onto the truck despite militia's resistance. He pulled down Wang Jiansheng's clothes to cover his belly and took off his service cap to put it on Wang Jiansheng's head. I think, that is an example of personality growth. Even in the most difficult of times which can force anyone to give in, there are still some people who refuse to cower down. The youngster Weiyi personally went through all such cases. This is the complete meaning of growth.



Brighten the Old Tale, and Praise the Past Heroine

By Xu Lu

Xu Lu is a well-known writer, poet, and critic of children's literature.

In the bottom of each child's heart, there will be a hero dream.

According to childhood education expert, almost every child's heart strings for opening up his wisdom are poked by the giant hands of "hero worship" from the very beginning. Since the remote fairy tale era, mankind has kept the tradition to spread hero tales, praise heroes' achievements, and use great heroes' tales to encourage later generations, and this tradition has been kept all the time till now.

"One day, I had a dream, and in the dream I saw myself wearing a piece of silvery coat armor, had long eyelashes, with my long hair coiled up, and the red bandeau fluttering with the wind. Then, I drew a picture of the girl in my dream. Ah, isn't that just Hua Mulan?"

That is the beginning of the story in the picture book **Hua Mulan** (written by Qin Wenjun and illustrated by Yu Rong).

It is a story beginning from the dreamland of a little girl aged ten living in the present time. It is a story well-known to Chinese people, about the heroine Hua Mulan, telling us how she disguised herself as a man, joined the army instead of her father and fought for her motherland.

Then, the story ends in the little girl's aftertaste full of yearning and pride:

"The me of today no longer wears a war robe, and no longer fights in the army in her father's place. But I'm growing up as bravely as I can. I love my family. I have my dreams. My heart pulses as sweetly as a flower. Ain't I just like Mulan?"

I'm giving away a secret. My friends have a nickname for me: Hua Mulan. I am Hua Mulan! Didn't you know? That's what everyone calls me."

It is a great song of praise of a heroine battling for her homestead.

It is also the dream of a lucid and attractive girl.

An excellent authoress has cooperated with an outstanding illustrator, to use their female warmth and nicety to refurbish this age-old tale. Thus, children of the present time can see again the sparkles of humanity coming out from the remote antiquity and the vast world, and taste the heroine's brave spirit and great love for her motherland and family, shown by her deeds of taking the earth as the bed and the sky as the quilt, defying all sufferings and fighting for the country.

Qin Wenjun's style of writing has always been characterized by lucidness and gentleness, yet, in her telling of this story, she could not help becoming so bold and big-hearted!

Look at her description:

"Mulan laid in the dirt with her clothes on. Cold hard steel glistened next to her head. The earth was her bed and the clouds were her blanket. She felt no fear, only the urgent desire for a quick victory."

While reading such sentences, we seem to have returned to the remote antiquity along with the writer, following Hua Mulan and her comrades in arms, returning to the ancient battlefield in North China, in the world of ice and snow...

Since the story about Hua Mulan appeared, Chinese people, one generation after another generation, have been spreading, telling and replaying it in various ways.

Even the world famous Disney Company also retold the story of Hua Mulan in a cartoon work some years ago.

The tale can be an old one, but the children are forever new. How to tell an old tale well is a great test for anyone, whether he is a writer or a painter.

When talking about the producing of this picture book, Qin Wenjun said, in order to tell the story well, she took the trouble to go to the desert of the north specially, to seek the heroism, honor and spirit of Hua Mulan in fighting, on the ancient battlefield, mountains and streams; in that boundless clear area, she also gazed at the shadows of flying birds, floating clouds, and the little flowers and grass by the ancient battlefield. "The limitless possibility and abundance in the growth of a girl glistened in my mind like a thunderclap, a girl's beautiful quality and natural instinct will not go extinct with the war. It seemed as though I have touched Hua Mulan's heart-shaking breath."

She said so well. I feel she has realized all she has said.

What differs from the story of Hua Mulan we have seen before is, while telling this story to children, Qin Wenjun has also infused some vivid and fresh details.

For instance, "The day before she was to set out, Mulan planted a peony in her courtyard because she had already begun to miss her home." "When she felt a great pain in her wound, she used the river water as a mirror, combed her long hair, and thought about that peony in her courtyard silently."

The writer also imagines from the viewing angle of today's little girls: "Isn't that the beautiful peony? It's my favorite flower. My guess is that it's Mulan's way of saying: even though I won't be around the flower will be here. It's the flower of my heart so when you see it, you see me."

Such details have not only made the story become so rich, but also infused a new vitality into the ancient story. It has also made the girl image of Hua Mulan become more realistic and clear, have a more striking individual character and human warmth.

The illustrator Yu Rong has given full play to her forte in paper cutting. She uses the traditional Chinese paper cutting techniques to display the beauty of details of the typical "Chinese Tales". We can say the two bring out the best in each other, and have perfectly realized Qin Wenjun's expectation for retelling of this hero story: "Here there are an aesthetic viewing angle, traces of the hearts, and a bright direction".

The picture book **Hua Mulan** is a great achievement in "Brightening the age-old tale and praising the past heroine".



A Selected Illustration from Qin's Books