



The Stuff of Stars

Marion Dane Bauer, Ekua Holmes (Illustrator)

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In an astonishing unfurling of our universe, Newbery Honor winner Marion Dane Bauer and Caldecott Honor winner Ekua Holmes celebrate the birth of every child.

Before the universe was formed, before time and space existed, there was . . . nothing. But then . . . BANG! Stars caught fire and burned so long that they exploded, flinging stardust everywhere. And the ash of those stars turned into planets. Into our Earth. And into us. In a poetic text, Marion Dane Bauer takes readers from the trillionth of a second when our universe was born to the singularities that became each one of us, while vivid illustrations by Ekua Holmes capture the void before the Big Bang and the ensuing life that burst across galaxies. A seamless blend of science and art, this picture book reveals the composition of our world and beyond -- and how we are all the stuff of stars.

The Stuff of Stars Details

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ISBN : 9780763678838

Author : Marion Dane Bauer , Ekua Holmes (Illustrator)

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Genre : Childrens, Picture Books, Science, Poetry, Nonfiction

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From Reader Review The Stuff of Stars for online ebook

Alyssa Nelson says

I received a free copy of this book from the publisher through LibraryThing Early Reviewers in exchange for an honest review.

This book is absolutely stunning. Each page is an explosion of color and wonderful to look at. This is a picture book for children of all ages—very young children will love all the colors in the pictures. Young children will enjoy the story of the universe and the message that we are all made of the same stuff as stars.

The Stuff of Stars is a beautiful book that's a great introduction to how the universe was made and how the earth, animals, and humans came into being. Really, it shows children that they are connected to life and the universe, so it's a great start on teaching them about all the different types of species that live or have lived on our planet. This would fit nicely into a teacher's unit on science as an introduction, or even in an art unit to show how abstract art can still tell a story. The words themselves are lyrical without being overly poetic or having a particular rhyme scheme, but there's a definite rhythm to the story itself.

Highly recommend! I'm looking forward to gifting a few young relatives with this book this Christmas, myself.

Also posted on Purple People Readers.

Alyson (Kid Lit Frenzy) says

The illustrations take this book to a new level.

Katie Fitzgerald says

This poetic and visually explosive picture book describes the big bang in lyrical text that captures the beauty and drama of the beginning of the universe. My almost-five-year-old was fascinated by the illustrations and though the book does not mention religion at all, she immediately attributed the images she saw to God, which made me feel good about her understanding of the relationship between faith and science. This book makes the abstract concept of how the universe came into being into something relatable, dynamic, and awe-inspiring.

This review also appears on my blog, Read-at-Home Mom.

Abigail says

A simple but poetic text exploring the birth of the universe, the formation of the planets and the solar system, the eventual evolution of life, and the birth of an individual child - the reader and/or listener, perhaps? - is

paired with astonishingly beautiful artwork in The Stuff of Stars. Each two page spread features a few sentences from author Marion Dane Bauer, who won a Newbery Honor for her children's novel, On My Honor, as well as the hand-marbled paper and collage art of illustrator Ekua Holmes, who won a Caldecott Honor for her work on Voice of Freedom: Fannie Lou Hamer. The result is that rarest of specimens: a picture-book which manages to explore an abstract concept successfully, and have both poetic and scientific significance...

I found The Stuff of Stars both beautiful and poignant, and marveled at both the text and artwork. Bauer's wordcrafting here is top notch, and there were moments when I had to stop, and savor the poetry of her text. When she described that first speck of something, "*invisible as thought, weighty as God*," I paused to consider. Her description of stars catching fire, but having "*no planets to attend*" them, gave me a little thrill. Her conclusion, in which a child is born, made of stardust, put me so strongly in mind of the first day of my college astronomy class, in which our professor made that same statement - that we humans were indeed made of stardust, just like everything in our world - that I smiled with delight. Holmes' artwork is every bit as beautiful as the text - and what a difficult text it must have been to illustrate, with so many complicated and abstract ideas bound up in it! Somehow she managed to triumph though, creating collage artwork that perfectly captures the mystery and the majesty of the cosmos and of creation. I missed this one when it came out a few months ago, being in hospital and away from work, but am glad to have finally discovered it. It is definitely on my Caldecott possibilities list! Recommended to anyone who appreciates gorgeous picture-book art, or who is looking for children's books about the Big Bang, and the evolution of the cosmos.

Dan says

Ekua Holmes' illustrations are absolutely awe inspiring!

Seraphim Muir says

Beautiful pictures
Makes science more interesting
Lots of metaphors and illustrations
The illustrations help to understand the difficult concept of science
Is probably okay to use in all public schools but it may not for private schools
Can use it for vocabulary

Ran says

Marion Dane Bauer's poem about creation (the big BANG!) is illustrated with hand-marbled images by Ekua Holmes. Very visually arresting and thoughtful for children. Of course, who doesn't love being told they are made of stardust?

Edward Sullivan says

The creation of the universe, the solar system, and Earth are stunningly and spectacularly imagined in verse and art.

Whitney says

This absolutely gorgeous picture book follows the journey of a tiny speck through the big bang. The speck becomes stardust, and the stardust becomes planets, plants, animals, and eventually, YOU (or the baby/child you are reading this to). Bauer's text has a rhythmic cadence to it that lends itself to reading out loud, and Holmes' illustrations give a dreamlike atmosphere to the book. The marbled pictures are wonderful, although maybe a bit too abstract for younger children - but still provide good opportunities to talk about colors, shapes, and imagery. At first I thought this book was going to be similar to *On The Night You Were Born* by Nancy Tillman, but while Tillman's book suggests that a child is the center of the universe, *The Stuff of Stars* instead teaches a child that they are one of many miraculous pieces of our infinite universe.

Thank you to Candlewick Press and LibraryThing for the advanced copy of this book!*

*This did not affect my review or rating.

Rebecca says

I have a shelf on Goodreads called "abstract idea," which is for picture books that I admire for how they visually represent something abstract. Here, illustrator Ekua Holmes may get the top prize, as she faces the challenge of illustrating the birth of the universe, the earth, and a child, described in lovely, spare verse by Marion Dane Bauer. Her images (hand-marbled paper and collage assembled digitally) dazzle the eyes with swirls of color and pattern. I expect Caldecott buzz for this one, too.

Paper marbling is an activity that may not have a solid book tie-in, until now. Programmers, take note!

KC says

A truly unique story with very abstract art about the birth of the universe, our planet, animals and humans

Sarah Hannah says

It is a poem! In a picturebook! With marbled illustrations! ABOUT THE BIG BANG!!!!

Sandra says

I'm really sad that the authors of what could have been a gorgeous non denominational book about the wonder of life and the interconnectedness of the universe decided it had to include 'weighty as God' putting itself squarely into capital G and singular territory and ruling out any non-theist or non-monotheistic individuals.

It's still beautiful, it just has a degree of exclusiveness it really didn't need.

BrookesEducationLibrary says

This book is absolutely stunning and so beautiful to look at, each page explodes with colour and tells a beautiful story as well :)

Nancy Kotkin says

Stunning collage-style illustrations accompany a beautifully worded poem about how the earth and life exploded into being. This captivating picture book is one of my 2019 Caldecott favorites.
