



WALTER DEAN MYERS & CHRISTOPHER MYERS

Born in Martinsburg, West Virginia, in 1937, Walter Dean Myers is one of the premier authors of books for children. Christopher Myers, his son, was born in New York City in 1974, and is an accomplished children's book author and illustrator.

Walter Dean Myers grew up in Harlem, New York, which became the setting for many of his books—including *Harlem*, his first picture book with Christopher. *Harlem* was awarded a Caldecott Honor Award, a Coretta Scott King Honor Award, and a *Boston Globe-Horn Book* Honor Award, to name just a few.

Walter and Christopher Myers have come together once again to create *Jazz*. This 2007 Coretta Scott King Honor Award-winning book is a vibrant look at the diversity and distinctive styles of jazz music through poetry and paintings. The jazz-inspired poetry captures the soulfulness of the music, whether in defining its origins or in reveling in its infectious toe-beating effect. And like an accompanist in a musical duet, Christopher Myers's fluid black-ink-and-acrylic paintings complement his father's glowing lyrics, at various times harmonizing with the text and at others quietly diverging.

Jazz has received glowing reviews and, in addition to the Coretta Scott King Honor, has been named an ALA Notable Book, a *Publishers Weekly* 100 Best Books of the Year, a *Parenting* magazine Mom-Tested! Book of the Year, an ALA *Booklist* Editors' Choice, and a *Kirkus Reviews* Editors' Choice, among many others. It is also the recipient of the Lee Bennett Hopkins Poetry Award and is an NAACP Image Award Nominee for Outstanding Literary Work—Poetry.

Both author and artist combine their talents to create something special in *Jazz*, as they did in their previous collaboration, *blues journey*. A celebration of the African experience in America, *blues journey* details the long voyage from the Middle Passage to life today. Christopher's bold and powerful paintings are the perfect complement to Walter's soulful, affecting blues poem. This is a story very close to their hearts—a true labor of love.

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Called “distinctive and intense” by *The New York Times Book Review* and “atmospheric” by *The Chicago Tribune*, **blues journey** has received many awards and honors. It has been named an American Library Association (ALA) Notable Book, a Lee Bennett Hopkins Poetry Award Honor Book, a *Horn Book* Fanfare Honor Book—Picture Book, a *Boston Globe-Horn Book* Honor Book, a *Bulletin* Blue Ribbon Nonfiction Book, a *Kirkus Reviews* Editors’ Choice, a *Booklist* Youth Arts and Black History Top 10 Pick, among others. It has also been adapted into an original production for the Family Theater of the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, DC.

In addition to the awards Walter Dean Myers and Christopher Myers won together for *Harlem*, Christopher has received two Coretta Scott King Honor Awards—for *Jazz* and *Black Cat*. He is also a fine artist, and his artwork has appeared in a number of shows, including at the famed P.S. 1 Contemporary Arts Center, an affiliate of the Museum of Modern Art, in New York City. He took part in the highly selective Whitney Museum of American Art Independent Studio program. Christopher is a graduate of Brown University.

Walter Dean Myers has won two Newbery Honor Awards and five Coretta Scott King Awards. His book *Monster* was the first winner of the Michael L. Printz Award for excellence in literature for young adults. Walter Dean Myers has also received the Margaret A. Edwards Award given by the American Library Association for his outstanding contribution to the field of young adult literature.

Walter Dean Myers has three grown children and lives with his wife, Constance, in Jersey City, New Jersey. Christopher Myers, the youngest of the three, lives in Brooklyn.

Books from Holiday House

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Walter Dean Myers
illustrated by Christopher Myers
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