

# Not Lost in Translation

## Batchelder Gets Noticeable Boost This Year

SHARON VERBETEN

This year, ALSC's Batchelder Award got a bit of a boost—with not just the international author of the winning book, but many representatives all the way from Japan.

The 2022 Mildred L. Batchelder Award—given to an outstanding children's book originally published in a language other than English in a country other than the United States, and subsequently translated into English for publication in the United States—was awarded to *Temple Alley Summer*. Originally published in Japanese as *Kimyōji Yokochō no Natsu*, the book was written by Sachiko Kashiwaba, illustrated by Miho Satake, translated by Avery Fischer Udagawa and published by Yonder: Restless Books for Young Readers. This is Yonder's first Batchelder Award Book, having previously been awarded an honor title.

Kashiwaba travelled from Japan to attend the awards ceremony June 27, 2022, during the ALA Annual Conference in Washington, DC. A representative from the Japanese Embassy also was in attendance, as well as representatives from the Japanese publisher who first published the book eleven years ago. The Japan Information and Culture Center (JICC) even hosted an event (<https://www.us.emb-japan.go.jp/jicc/events/conversation-kashiwaba.html>).

Paula Holmes, co-chair for ALSC 2023 President's Program and a member of the ALSC Budget Committee, speaks highly of the award. She commented online, "This is *the* award I await with anxious anticipation. I hope that this year's Batchelder having five honor books and one award winner, which hasn't happened since it was first awarded in 1968, will provide a core collection and serve as an introduction to the fabulous work that these translators and publishers are



Sachiko Kashiwaba speaking at an Author's Talk presented by the Japan Information and Culture Center, Embassy of Japan. Photos courtesy and © Embassy of Japan in the USA

doing. This ultimately benefits children's librarians and the families they serve."

"The Batchelder Award comes as such an encouragement, not least because fellow WorldKidLit fans pay close attention and have gotten in touch," said translator Avery Fischer Udagawa.

"This is such a wonderful community. I am thrilled that the award is receiving coverage in Japan, as well as in the US, and I hope that this will help Sachiko Kashiwaba's story make its way to more young readers."

To read the acceptance speech, visit <https://alair.ala.org/bitstream/handle/11213/18267/yonder-2022-batchelder.pdf?sequence=5&isAllowed=y>.



Sharon Verbeten is Youth Services Manager at Manitowoc (WI) Public Library; this is her twentieth year as editor of Children and Libraries.

## A Chat with the Publisher

Alison Gore, editor at Restless Books, discusses the excitement of this year's Batchelder Award.

### Has Restless Books/Yonder won any other Batchelder Awards?

Our young adult title *Run for Your Life* by Silvana Gandolfi, translated from the Italian by Lynne Sharon Schwartz, was a 2019 Batchelder Honor Book. It was just the third book in our Yonder imprint of international books for young readers.

### What do you think of the new ALSC rule that books must name the translators on the cover or title page to be accepted for submission?

We're so thrilled! The #namethetranslator movement has really gained some serious traction and attention this year, so it's great to see ALSC formalize their stance and make this a requirement for future Batchelder submissions. It's an important example to set for other awards, and we hope this change will encourage other literary organizations to make similar updates to their award guidelines. Restless has always credited translators on the covers of our books in translation, as translators are co-creators and artists, and we think it's essential to honor their work. Huge thanks to the supporters of international literature, translators, and advocates who worked to make this change.

### Some thoughts on winning the Batchelder and what it does to the profile of a company like Restless?

Winning the Batchelder is such an incredible honor. We started Yonder, our children's imprint, only five years ago in 2017, so to receive this kind of recognition at an early stage in our imprint's life is a huge achievement. We were so grateful to have both Sachiko Kashiwaba and Avery Fischer Udagawa attend the ALSC ceremony. The Batchelder has introduced *Temple Alley Summer* to an even wider readership, boosted sales, and generated new media interest. We're thrilled to be publishing a follow-up from Sachiko Kashiwaba, *The House of the Lost on the Cape*, also translated by Avery Fischer Udagawa, next summer.

## Acknowledging Translators

Books submitted for the Mildred L. Batchelder Award must now visibly acknowledge their translators.

In January 2022, the Board of Directors of the Association for Library Service to Children (ALSC), voted to revise the submission criteria for the award to add requirements regarding credit to translators. The new language requires that "the translator(s)' name(s) shall appear, at minimum, on the title page along with the author(s)' name(s), and ideally the translator(s)' name(s) shall appear on the cover along with the author(s)' name(s) as well."

The Batchelder Award, established in 1966, is awarded to a US publisher for a children's book considered to be the most outstanding of those books originating in a country other than the United States and in a language other than English and subsequently translated into English for publication in the US.

In addition to the criteria change, effective with the 2023 Batchelder Award conferral, certificates will be presented to translators of Batchelder Award and Honor Books to acknowledge their exemplary work.

The member-driven recommendation for the criteria change was developed through consultation with publishers of translated titles, ALSC members, and others in the translation community.

Lucia Gonzalez, immediate past president of ALSC, says the intent was to "make a vital commitment to acknowledging translators. This decision attests to the importance of literary translations as a creative art that requires skill and a strong sensibility to language, writing, and the reading experience of children. The success of a translated title for children depends heavily on the merit of its translation," she says.