



Georgia Peach Teen Readers' Choice Award Nominees 2004

911: The Book of Help, Michael Cart. SLJ, BL

In *911: The Book of Help*, award-winning writers share their responses to the September 11, 2001 tragedy and describe the heroism of those who first rushed to help. The works in 911 are donated, and 50 percent of the net proceeds will go to a charity assisting children and spouses of victims.

Born Confused, Tanuja Desai Hidier. SLJ, BL, YALSA Best Books for Young Adults

Dimple Lala doesn't know what to think. Her parents are from India, and she's spent her whole life resisting their traditions. Then suddenly she gets to high school and everything Indian is trendy. To make matters worse, her parents arrange for her to meet a "suitable boy." Of course it doesn't go well -- until Dimple goes to a club and finds him spinning a magical web. Suddenly the suitable boy is suitable because of his sheer unsuitability. Complications ensue. This is a funny, thoughtful story about finding your heart, finding your culture, and finding your place in America.

Breathing Underwater, Alex Finn. SLJ, BL

Intelligent, popular, handsome, and wealthy, sixteen-year-old Nick Andreas is pretty much perfect -- on the outside, at least. What no one knows -- not even his best friend -- is the terror that Nick faces every time he is alone with his father. Then he and Caitlin fall in love, and Nick thinks his problems are over. Caitlin is the one person who he can confide in. But when things start to spiral out of control, Nick must face the fact that he's gotten more from his father than green eyes and money.

Catalyst, Laurie Halse Anderson. SLJ

Meet Kate Malone--straight-A science and math geek, minister's daughter, ace long-distance runner, new girlfriend (to Mitchell "Early Decision Harvard" Pangborn III), unwilling family caretaker, and emotional avoidance champion. Kate manages her life by organizing it as logically as the periodic table. She can handle it all--or so she thinks. Then, things change as suddenly as a string of chemical reactions; first, the Malones' neighbors get burned out of their own home and move in. Kate has to share her room with her nemesis, Teri Litch, and Teri's little brother. The days are ticking down and she's still waiting to hear from the only college she applied to: MIT. Kate feels that her life is spinning out of her control--and then, something happens that truly blows it all apart. Set in the same community as the remarkable *Speak*, *Catalyst* is a novel that will change the way you look at the world.

First Part Last, Angela Johnson. SLJ, BL

Bobby is your classic urban teenaged boy -- impulsive, eager, restless. On his sixteenth birthday he gets some news from his girlfriend, Nia, that changes his life forever. She's pregnant. Bobby's going to be a father. Suddenly things like school and house parties and hanging with friends no longer seem important as they're replaced by visits to Nia's obstetrician and a social worker who says that the only way for Nia and Bobby to lead a normal life is to put their baby up for adoption.

The Gospel According to Larry, Janet Tashjian. SLJ Starred Review, BL Starred Review

Josh Swensen is not your average 17-year-old. At the age of two, he was figuring out algebraic equations with colored magnetic numbers. He is a prodigy who only wants to make the world a better place. Josh's wish comes true when his virtual alter ego, Larry, becomes a huge media sensation. Larry has his own Web site where he posts sermons on anti-consumerism and has a large following of adults and teens. Meanwhile, Larry's identity is a mystery to everyone. While it seems as if the whole world is trying to figure out Larry's true identity, Josh feels trapped inside his own creation. What will happen to the world, and to Larry, if he is exposed?

Green Angel, Alice Hoffman. SLJ, BL

When her family is lost in a terrible disaster, 15-yr-old Green is haunted by loss and by the past. Struggling to survive physically and emotionally in a place where nothing seems to grow and ashes are everywhere, Green retreats into the ruined realm of her garden. But in destroying her feelings, she also begins to destroy herself, erasing the girl she'd once been as she inks ravens into her skin. It is only through a series of mysterious encounters -- with a ghostly white dog and a mute boy -- that Green relearns the lessons of love and begins to heal as she tells her own story.

The Kite Runner, Khaled Hosseini. SLJ, BL, LJ

The unforgettable, heartbreaking story of the unlikely friendship between a wealthy boy and the son of his father's servant, *The Kite Runner* is a beautifully crafted novel set in a country that is in the process of being destroyed. It is about the power of reading, the price of betrayal, and the possibility of redemption, and it is also about the power of fathers over sons-their love, their sacrifices, their lies.

The Known World, Edward P. Jones. BL, National Book Award Finalist

Henry Townsend, a black farmer, bootmaker, and former slave, has a fondness for *Paradise Lost* and an unusual mentor -- William Robbins, perhaps the most powerful man in antebellum Virginia's Manchester County. Under Robbins's tutelage, Henry becomes proprietor of his own plantation -- as well as of his own slaves. When he dies, his widow, Caldonia, succumbs to profound grief, and things begin to fall apart at their plantation: slaves take to escaping under the cover of night, and families who had once found love beneath the weight of slavery begin to betray one another. Beyond the Townsend estate, the known world also unravels: low-paid white patrollers stand watch

as slave "speculators" sell free black people into slavery, and rumors of slave rebellions set white families against slaves who have served them for years.

Left for Dead, Pete Nelson. SLJ, BL

The story of the USS Indianapolis, the worst naval disaster in American history, is indeed true. So is the story of the shameful court-martial of the ship's captain, shameful because the loss of the ship was not his fault, and the Navy knew it. Hunter Scott became the catalyst for the survivors' efforts to clear their captain's name and set the record straight. This is the story of the ship, her brave sailors, their wronged captain, and a young man's crusade to right an old injustice.

Lirael, Garth Nix. SLJ, BL

In this sequel to the critically acclaimed *Sabriel*, Garth Nix draws readers deeper into the magical landscape of the Old Kingdom and weaves a spellbinding tale of discovery, destiny, and danger.

The Merlin Conspiracy, Diana Wynne Jones. SLJ, BL

Two friends, Roddy and Grundo, suspect a conspiracy, but no adult will believe them. When a boy from another world, Nick, blunders into the trouble on Blest, Roddy tries to enlist his help. But what can three children who are just discovering their magical talents do against the new Merlin, the Earthmistress, and the dark powers they're calling up? The dangers are great, and if Roddy, Grundo, and Nick fail to stop the conspirators before they disrupt the balance of magic, the results will be far more far-reaching and destructive than they can imagine.

No More Dead Dogs, Gordon Korman. BL

Eighth-grade football hero Wallace Wallace is sentenced to detention attending rehearsals of the school play where, in spite of himself, he becomes wrapped up in the production and begins to suggest changes that improve not only the play but his life as well.

The Pact: Three Young Men Make a Promise and Fulfill a Dream, Sampson Davis, George Jenkins, Rameck Hunt. SLJ, LJ, BL

They grew up on the streets of Newark, facing city life's temptations, pitfalls, even jail. But one day these three young men made a pact. They promised each other they would all become doctors, and stick it out together through the long, difficult journey to attain that dream. Sampson Davis, George Jenkins, and Rameck Hunt are not only friends to this day—they are all doctors.

Persepolis: The Story of a Childhood, Marjane Satrapi. SLJ, BL

Originally published to wide critical acclaim in France, where it elicited comparisons to Art Spiegelman's **Maus**, **Persepolis** is Marjane Satrapi's wise, funny, and heartbreaking

memoir of growing up in Iran during the Islamic Revolution. In powerful black-and-white comic strip images, Satrapi tells the story of her life in Tehran from ages six to fourteen, years that saw the overthrow of the Shah's regime, the triumph of the Islamic Revolution, and the devastating effects of war with Iraq. The intelligent and outspoken only child of committed Marxists and the great-granddaughter of one of Iran's last emperors, Marjane bears witness to a childhood uniquely entwined with the history of her country.

A Stone in My Hand, Cathryn Clinton. SLJ, BL Editors' Choice

Eleven-year-old Malaak and her family are touched by the violence in Gaza between Jews and Palestinians when first her father disappears and then her older brother is drawn to the Islamic Jihad.

Stoner & Spaz, Ron Koertge. SLJ, BL Starred Review, Printz Honor Book

A troubled youth with cerebral palsy struggles toward self-acceptance with the help of a drug-addicted young woman.

Uncommon Faith, Trudy Krisher. SLJ, BL

In Millbrook, MA, in the summer of 1837, a fire in the livery killed six people and injured many more. But that was only the beginning of the change in this small New England town. Ten characters tell the tangled tale, including friends and classmates of Faith Common, a brash and outspoken 14-year-old who champions the underdog and rallies the girls against a cruel schoolmaster who believes that "teaching a girl to master geometry is a bit like teaching a mule to dance."

Under A War-Torn Sky, L.M. Elliott. SLJ, BL

After his plane is shot down by Hitler's Luftwaffe, nineteen-year-old Henry Forester of Richmond, Virginia, strives to walk across occupied France, with the help of the French Resistance, in hopes of rejoining his unit.

When the Emperor Was Divine, Julie Otsuka. LJ, BL

Julie Otsuka's commanding debut novel paints a portrait of the Japanese internment camps unlike any we have ever seen. With crystalline intensity and precision, Otsuka uses a single family to evoke the deracination—both physical and emotional—of a generation of Japanese Americans. In five chapters, each flawlessly executed from a different point of view—the mother receiving the order to evacuate; the daughter on the long train ride to the camp; the son in the desert encampment; the family's return to their home; and the bitter release of the father after more than four years in captivity—she has created a small tour de force, a novel of unrelenting economy and suppressed emotion. Spare, intimate, arrestingly understated, *When the Emperor Was Divine* is a haunting evocation of a family in wartime and an unmistakably resonant lesson for our times. It heralds the arrival of a singularly gifted new novelist.