

HONOREE



Paul O. Zelinsky

Class of 1970

PAUL O. ZELINSKY is the illustrator of many well-known and award-winning books for children, a number of which he also wrote or adapted.

Born in Evanston to a medical-illustrator mother and a mathematician father, he grew up in Wilmette, graduating from New Trier East in 1970.

There he was art editor of the student literary magazine *Inklings* and the mimeographed French magazine called *Le Flambeau*. He attended Yale College, where in his sophomore year a seminar was offered on children's picture books, taught by Maurice Sendak. Apart from this one course, his art education at Yale and then in the graduate program at Tyler School of Art was entirely focused on Fine Art, a field where illustration was held in some contempt, making the seminar all the more seminal an influence in Zelinsky's career and life.

After earning his MFA in Painting, he briefly taught college art in California, then resolved to become an illustrator and moved to New York.

Zelinsky has illustrated 30-odd books for all age levels. Best-known is *The Wheels on the Bus* with over 3,000,000 sales in the U.S. alone. His retelling of *Rapunzel* won the Caldecott Medal in 1998, and three of his other books received Caldecott Honors. His recent concept books with Kelly Bingham, starring an out-of-control moose, have attracted wide notice.

Zelinsky is active in various literacy and literary organizations. He sits on the Board of The Society of Children's Book Writers and Illustrators and co-chairs the Children's and Young Adult Committee of PEN American Center. He serves on the Ezra Jack Keats Committee, which awards a prize to new writers and illustrators of picture books, and he has consulted with the Ghana-based Golden Baobab Awards, acting as a judge for their new picture book illustration prize in Africa.

Zelinsky and his wife Deborah have two grown daughters and live in Brooklyn, NY.

