

# Latinx Creators

## Fiction and Graphic Novels

### Early Chapter, Easy Reader and Series Books

Bowles, David. *13th Street: Battle of the Bad-Breath Bats* (Early Chapter series). Cousins Malia, Ivan, and Dante are visiting their aunt for the summer. But on their way to the water park, they get lost on 13th Street. Only it's not a street at all. It's a strange world filled with dangerous beasts!

Brown, Monica. *Lola Levine is Not Mean* (Early Chapter series). Second grader Lola has a wonderful family, a great teacher, and the best friend ever, Josh, and they all help her feel better after she is teased and forbidden to play team sports at recess for having accidentally hurt a classmate.

González, Sarai. *Sarai and the Meaning of Awesome* (Early Chapter series). Fourth grader Sarai Gonzalez can do anything. She can bake, dance, and run her own cupcake business. But when her grandparents are forced to move, she's not sure what to do.

McDonald, Kirsten. *Carlos and Carmen: The Sweet Treasure* (Readers Level 2 series). Twins Carlos and Carmen want to make this year's Father's Day really special for Papá. Working together, they come up with the perfect idea—a treasure hunt.

Medina, Juana. *Juana & Lucas* (Early Chapter series). A spunky young girl from Colombia loves playing with her canine best friend and resists boring school activities, especially learning English.

Jules, Jacqueline. *Sofia Martinez: My Family Adventure* (Early Chapter and Readers Level 2 series). Seven-year-old Sofia's fiery passion for everything she does makes every day an adventure, from a missing class pet to her grandma's birthday!

Miedoso, Andres. *Desmond Cole, Ghost Patrol: The Haunted House Next Door* (Kids Paperback series). When supernatural things start happening in the house timid Andres and his parents just moved into, next-door-neighbor Desmond Cole, eight, comes to the rescue.

Raúl the Third. *El Toro & Friends: Tag Team* (Readers Level 1 series). After last night's match, the stadium is a mess! There is so much work to be done and Mexican wrestling star El Toro feels overwhelmed.

Siegal, Ida. *Emma is On the Air: Big News* (Early Chapter series). Follow young Emma Perez's journey into journalism, mystery solving, and fame!

### Fiction

Acevedo, Chantel. *Muse Squad: The Cassandra Curse* (series). When a young Cuban American girl discovers that she's one of the nine muses of Greek mythology, she must use her newfound powers to help a brilliant classmate.

Alegre, Reina Luz. *The Dream Weaver*. Twelve-year-old Zoey navigates the tricky waters of friendship and family while searching for a way to save her grandfather's bowling alley from closing.

Aster, Alex. *Emblem Island: Curse of the Night Witch* (series). After changing the fate he has known since birth, twelve-year-old Tor Luna must visit the Night Witch to break the curse he now faces.

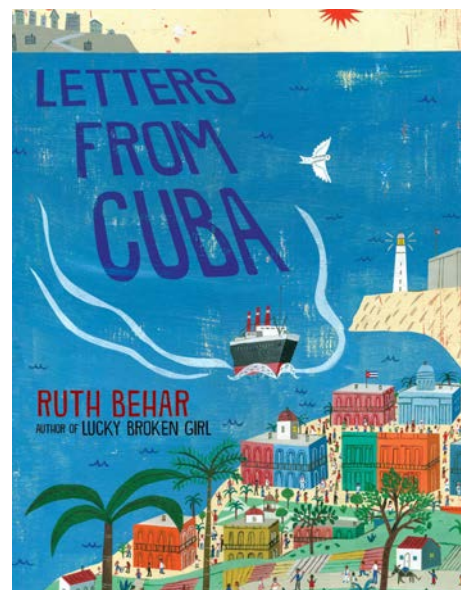
Balcárcel, Rebecca. *The Other Half of Happy*. Twelve-year-old Quijana is a biracial girl, desperately trying to understand the changes that are going on in her life; her mother always gets home late, her father suddenly seems to be trying to get in touch with his Guatemalan roots, and she is worried about fitting in when she starts seventh grade.

Behar, Ruth. *Letters from Cuba*. In 1938, eleven-year-old Esther joins her father in tropical, multicultural Cuba, where they toil together to rescue the rest of their Jewish family from persecution in Poland. Also by Ruth Behar: *Lucky Broken Girl*.

Bowles, David. *They Call me Güero: A Border Kid's Poems*. Twelve-year-old Güero, a red-headed, freckled Mexican American kid, discovers the joy of writing poetry, thanks to his seventh grade English teacher. Also by David Bowles: *Garza Twins* (series).

Burgos, Hilda Eunice. *Ana María Reyes Does Not Live in a Castle*. With a new sibling on the way and a big piano recital on the horizon, Dominican-American Ana María Reyes tries to win a scholarship to a New York City private school.

Calejo, Ryan. *Charlie Hernández and the League of Shadows* (series). Steeped in Hispanic folklore since childhood, middle schooler Charlie Hernandez learns the stories are true when, shortly after his parents' disappearance, he grows horns and feathers and finds himself at the heart of a battle to save the world.



Cartaya, Pablo. *Each Tiny Spark*. Sixth-grader Emilia Torres struggles with ADHD, her controlling abuela, her mother's work commitments, her father's distance after returning from deployment and evolving friendships. Also by Pablo Cartaya: *Marcus Vega Doesn't Speak Spanish*; and *The Epic Fail of Arturo Zamora*.

Cervantes, Angela. *Lety Out Loud*. Lety Muñoz's first language is Spanish, and she likes to take her time putting her words together. She loves volunteering at the Furry Friends Animal Shelter because the dogs and cats there don't care if she can't always find the right word. Also by Angela Cervantes: *Allie, First at Last*; *Gaby, Lost and Found*; and *Me, Frida, and the Secret of the Peacock Ring*.

Cisneros, Ernesto. *Efrén Divided*. While his father works two jobs, seventh-grader Efrén Nava must take care of his twin siblings, kindergartners Max and Mia, after their mother is deported to Mexico.

Córdova, Zoraida. *The Way to Rio Luna*. Eleven-year-old Danny Monteverde believes in magic, especially that his older sister, Pili, is waiting for him somewhere in Rio Luna, the enchanted land in their favorite book of fairy tales. Just when he begins to lose faith, he finds a mysterious book in the library: a map to Rio Luna.

Cuevas, Adrianna. *The Total Eclipse of Nestor Lopez*. A Cuban-American boy must use his ability to communicate with animals to save the inhabitants of his town when they are threatened by a witch.

Delacre, Lulu. Us. *In Progress: Short Stories About Young Latinos* (Tween). Stories looking at the diversity of the Latinx experience in the United States, from a young girl spending the day at her father's burrito truck to sisters working together to change one's immigration status.

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## Fiction and Graphic Novels

### Fiction, cont.

Diaz, Alexandra. *The Only Road* (series). Twelve-year-old Jaime makes the hard journey from his home in Guatemala to his older brother in New Mexico after his cousin is murdered by a drug cartel.

Dobbs, Alda P. *Barefoot Dreams of Petra Luna*. After her mother dies and her father is dragged away by soldiers in 1931 during the Mexican Revolution, 12-year-old Petra Luna will do anything to keep her family safe and lead them to a better life across the U.S. border.

Dominguez, Angela. *Stella Diaz Has Something to Say* (series). Stella wants to be friends with the new boy in class, but sometimes she speaks Spanish instead of English and pronounces words wrong.

Duarte Armendariz, Luisana. *Julieta and the Diamond Enigma*. When a diamond goes missing from the Louvre, it is up to nine-year-old Julieta to identify the thief, exonerate her father, and return home to Boston before her baby brother is born.

Engle, Margarita. *Forest World*. Sent to Cuba to visit the father he barely knows, Edver meets his half-sister, Luza, whose plan to lure their cryptozoologist mother into coming there, too, turns dangerous. Also by Margarita Engle: *Silver People: Voices from the Panama Canal*; and *The Lightning Dreamer: Cuba's Greatest Abolitionist* (Tween).

Garza, Xavier. *Vincent Ventura and the Mystery of the Chupacabras* (World Languages: Spanish; bilingual series). Vincent is certain that the mysterious disappearance of local pets is because his new neighbor is really a chupacabra! Also by Xavier Garza: *Maximilian & the Mystery of the Guardian Angel: A Bilingual Lucha Libre Thriller* (series).

Gonzalez, Mandy. *Fearless*. Rehearsing what may be the last show in a theater, twelve-year-old Monica Garcia and other cast members are locked in and must try to appease a ghost and reverse a curse.

Hernandez, Carlos. *Sal and Gabi Break the Universe* (series). To heal after his mother's death, Sal learned how to meditate. No one expected him to be able to reach into time and space to retrieve things from other universes!

Higuera, Donna Barba. *The Last Cuentista*. Petra Peña wanted nothing more than to be a storyteller, like her abuelita. But Earth has been destroyed by a comet, and only a few hundred scientists and their children - among them Petra and her family - have been chosen to journey to a new planet. Also by Donna Barba Higuera: *Lupe Wong Won't Dance*.

López, Diana. *Lucky Luna*. Fifth grader Luna's cousin Claudia is a source of constant annoyance. When there's a bullying situation at school, Luna realizes that cousins have to stand up for each other. Also by Diana López: *Ask My Mood Ring How I Feel* (Tween).

Older, Daniel José. *Flood City*. Flood City is the last inhabitable place on Earth and the battleground between the Chemical Barons, who once ruled the planet and now circle overhead in spaceships, and the Star Guard, who have controlled the city for decades. Also by Daniel José Older: *Dactyl Hill Squad* (series).

Medina, Meg. *Merci Suárez Changes Gears* (series). Merci Suárez knew that sixth grade would be different, but it's more than she expected. She and her brother have to do extra community service for their private school scholarship. Plus, Merci's abuelo has been acting strangely and no one in her family will tell her what's going on. Also by Meg Medina: *Burn Baby Burn* (Tween).

Mejia, Tehlor Kay. *Paola Santiago and the River of Tears* (series). In Silver Springs, Arizona, her mother's stories of the monstrous La Llorona are thrilling but unbelievable to science-loving Paola until she and her best friends take a walk through a cactus field near the Gila River.

Méndez, Yamile Saied. *Shaking up the House*. The outgoing First Daughters play a prank on their incoming counterparts, sparking an epic prank war.

Meriano, Anna. *Love Sugar Magic: A Dash of Trouble* (series). Wanting to be a part of her family's Día de los Muertos preparations, Leonora sneaks out of school to discover her mother, aunt, and older sisters have been keeping a secret

Oshiro, Mark. *The Insiders*. Twelve-year-old Hãector Muãnoz, fleeing from bullies, discovers a magical closet that not only provides him sanctuary, but also unites him with two other kids facing similar problems at their own schools, helping them find friendship and strength in each other.

Pendleton Jiménez, Karleen. *The Street Belongs to Us*. In 1984 Los Angeles, tomboy Alex and her troubled best friend Wolf are excited to explore when their street is torn up by construction machines, but Alex's grandmother warns them that some buried things want to be found and some want to stay hidden.

Pérez, Celia C. *Strange Birds: A Field Guide to Ruffling Feathers*. After four friends fail to persuade a local girls club to change an outdated tradition, they form an alternative group that shakes up their sleepy Florida town. Also by Celia C. Pérez: *The First Rule of Punk*.

Piñeiro, Victor. *Time Villains*. When a homework assignment and a magic table summon real and fictional people from history, including the bloodthirsty pirate Blackbeard, sixth-grader Javi and his friends join forces to save the world.

Rivera, Kaela. *Cece Rios and the Desert of Souls*. Privately questioning her remote community's superstitions about dangerous powerful spirits, Cecelia Rios experiments with the forbidden art of brujería to rescue her kidnapped sister.

Rivera, Lilliam. *Goldie Vance: The Hotel Whodunit* (series). In early 1960s Florida, sixteen-year-old Goldie, an aspiring detective, investigates when a diamond-encrusted swim cap goes missing during the filming of a movie.

Ryan, Pam Muñoz. *Mañanaland*. If Maximiliano Córdoba could see the future, he would know if he'd make the fútbol team and whether he'd ever meet his mother. When Max uncovers a buried family secret—involving an underground network of guardians who lead people fleeing a neighboring country to safety—he decides to seek answers on his own. Also by Pam Muñoz Ryan: *Becoming Naomi León*; *Echo*; *Esperanza Rising*; and *The Dreamer*.

Salazar, Aida. *Land of the Cranes*. When nine-year-old Betita's beloved father is arrested and deported to Mexico, Betita and her pregnant mother are detained, but she finds heart in her own poetry and in the community she and her mother find in the camp. Also by Aida Salazar: *The Moon Within*.

Torres, Jennifer. *The Fresh New Face of Griselda*. After her father's landscaping business fails and the family loses their house, sixth-grader Griselda Zaragoza follows her sister's example and begins selling Alma cosmetics while hiding her changed circumstances from friends. Also by Jennifer Torres: *Flor and Miranda Steal the Show*; and *Stef Soto, Taco Queen*.

Unger, David. *Sleeping With the Light On*. Davico lives with his family in Guatemala City in the early 1950s. One day, Davico hears shooting in the streets. There are blackouts every evening, tanks and soldiers swarm the front of the National Palace, and the family must sleep under the big wooden table in the dining room. Davico wants to be brave, but he's terrified, even when his parents announce that it's time to leave for the USA.

Weaver, Lila Quintero. *My Year in the Middle*. At Lu Olivera's school the white kids and black kids sit on different sides of the classroom, while Lu just wants to get along with everyone. However, growing racial tensions will not let Lu stay neutral about the racial divide in school.

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# Latinx Creators

## Fiction and Graphic Novels

### Graphic Novels

Bermudez, Alyssa. *Big Apple Diaries*. Twelve-year-old New Yorker Alyssa is navigating the trials and tribulations of middle school, but then life abruptly changes on September 11, 2001 and worries about gossip and boys feel distant and insignificant.

Blas, Terry. *Hotel Dare* (Tween). Olive and her siblings are spending the summer with their estranged grandma at her creepy hotel. They're stuck inside doing boring chores but they soon stumble upon a secret involving mystery, danger and alternate worlds. Also by Terry Blas: *Dead Weight: Murder at Camp Bloom* (Tween).

Bowles, David. *Rise of the Halfling King*. A magical boy from Mayan mythology faces impossible tasks and a ruthless king to save the people of Mexico.

Camper, Cathy. *Lowriders in Space* (series). Lupe, Flapjack, Elirio customize their car into a low rider for the Universal Car Competition to win the cash prize that will enable them to buy a garage.

Hernandez, Gilbert. *Marble Season* (Tween). Huey stages Captain America plays and treasures his older brother's comic book collection almost as much as his approval while growing up in the 60's.

Hernandez, Jaime. *The Dragon Slayer: Folktales from Latin America* (Non-fiction graphic novels 398.2 HER). How would a kitchen maid fare against a seven-headed dragon? What happens when a woman marries a mouse? And what can a young man learn from a thousand ants?

Mercado, Yehudi. *Chunky*. Hudi would rather do anything else than try out for sports, but then he meets Chunky, his imaginary friend and mascot. Also by Yehudi Mercado: *Rocket Salvage*; and *Sci-Fu*.

Montijo, Rhode. *Gum Girl: Chews Your Destiny* (series). Gabby Gomez loves to chew bubble gum even though her mother has warned her against it. It's not like she will turn into gum... until she does!

Reynolds, Justin and Pablo Leon. *Miles Morales: Shock Waves*. After a disastrous earthquake strikes his mother's birthplace of Puerto Rico, Miles springs into action to help set up a fundraiser for the devastated island. But when a new student's father goes missing, Miles makes connections between the disappearance and a giant corporation sponsoring Miles' fundraiser.

*Voces sin Fronteras: Our Stories, Our Truth* (Non-fiction graphic novels 362.779 VOC). Sixteen young people from the Latin American Youth Center in Washington, D.C. came together to tell their own stories of immigration and transformation.

### 2021 Pura Belpré Book Awards



The Pura Belpré Award, established in 1996, is presented to a Latinx writer and illustrator whose work best portrays, affirms, and celebrates the Latinx cultural experience in an outstanding work of literature for children and youth.

The award is named after Pura Belpré, the first Latina librarian at the New York Public Library. As a children's librarian, storyteller, and author, she enriched the lives of Puerto Rican children in the U.S.A. through her pioneering work of preserving and disseminating Puerto Rican folklore. The award is now given annually. It was given as a biennial award from 1996 through 2008. Author awards for Young Adult materials were added in 2021.

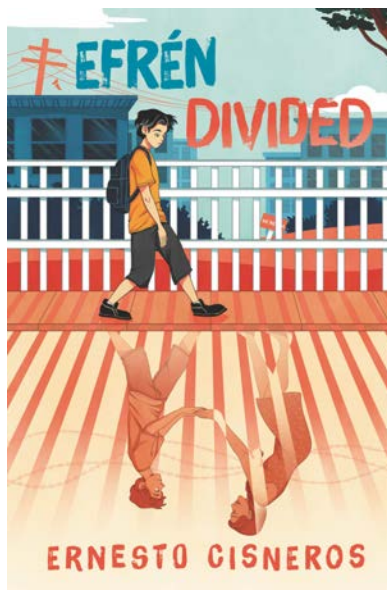
#### 2021 Youth Author Winner

*Efrén Divided* by Ernesto Cisneros

#### 2021 Youth Author Honor Books

*The Total Eclipse of Nestor Lopez* by Adrianna Cuevas

*Lupe Wong Won't Dance* by Donna Barba Higuera



### Past Pura Belpré Book Award Author Winners

1996: *An Island Like You: Stories of the Barrio* by Judith Ortiz Cofer

1998: *Parrot in the Oven: Mi Vida* by Victor Martinez

2000: *Under the Royal Palms: A Childhood in Cuba* by Alma Flor Ada

2002: *Esperanza Rising* by Pam Muñoz Ryan

2004: *Before We Were Free* by Julia Alvarez

2006: *The Tequila Worm* by Viola Canales

2008: *The Poet Slave of Cuba: A Biography of Juan Francisco Manzano* by Margarita Engle

2009: *The Surrender Tree: Poems of Cuba's Struggle for Freedom* by Margarita Engle

2010: *Return to Sender* by Julia Alvarez

2011: *The Dreamer* by Pam Muñoz Ryan

2012: *Under the Mesquite* by Guadalupe Garcia McCall

2013: *Aristotle and Dante Discover the Secrets of the Universe* by Benjamin Alire Sáenz

2014: *Yaqui Delgado Wants to Kick Your Ass* by Meg Medina

2015: *I Lived on Butterfly Hill* by Marjorie Agosín

2016: *Enchanted Air: Two Cultures, Two Wings: A Memoir* by Margarita Engle

2017: *Juana & Lucas* by Juana Medina

2018: *Lucky Broken Girl* by Ruth Behar

2019: *The Poet X* by Elizabeth Acevedo

2020: *Sal and Gabi Break the Universe* by Carlos Hernandez