



Peter Sís

Author Program In-depth Interview Insights Beyond the Slide Shows

Peter Sís, interviewed in his studio in New York, New York on January 16, 2004.

TEACHINGBOOKS: You grew up in Czechoslovakia.

PETER SIS: In Czechoslovakia when I was in school, the official message was, “This is a communist bloc and we don’t want to go and see the bad people somewhere else.” So, I’m grateful to my father who went to Tibet and traveled elsewhere when I was a little boy. He would always come back and say, “The world is beautiful, one day you will go. One day you will be in America.” I remember thinking, “This is insane, what would I be doing in America?”

TEACHINGBOOKS: Your Caldecott Honor book, *Tibet Through the Red Box*, was inspired by your father’s stories of his experiences.

PETER SIS: This book is with me since I was a little child. When my father got back from Tibet, he had all these stories to tell, but he couldn’t tell them publicly. So I was the recipient. I heard about this boy king, “Dalai Lama,” but I thought it’s all made up.

My father couldn’t publish these stories because he was in a totalitarian regime and he was talking about some spiritual religion somewhere in Asia. But he was a great chef, so he wrote a cookbook called *The Counting of the Noodles in the Spring Soup*. In between the Chinese recipes he had these stories. People loved that book — it was sold out because you could cook, but also you get the spiritual sort of thing.

When I came to America, my father said, “Why don’t you do the book I did, because it was so successful in Czechoslovakia?” I put it all together in some very awkward English and I tried to show it to the publishers, who, in that time said, “No, we are not into cookbooks.” I didn’t know how to get this idea of Tibet over.

Many, many years passed, and it’s now 1996. I actually have my doubts about books because I did *Galileo* and I realized that my children don’t care about these heavily illustrated, philosophical books at all, and I do *Fire Truck* for my son because he likes simple things. And I said, “This is great, I don’t have to spend years doing these pictures, I can do simple books which go for little children.” When my father, all of a sudden, writes me a letter and he says, “I’m thinking about what to leave you because I won’t be here very much longer.” And it was a complete shock to me because I was living in some denial. He was always there for me. We had this very amazing relationship. And I found out that he was diagnosed with cancer and that, of course, brought all kinds of emotions in me. And I thought, “I have to deal with this whole history of Tibet.”

So, *Tibet Through the Red Box* happened in a frenzy. I mean, it took a year to do, but it happened so quickly because I was trying to be able to show it to him before he’s gone. I didn’t know how much time he’s got left.

It was very interesting showing him the finished book, because he didn't speak English, and it wasn't published in Czech. I also realized it's very difficult to pay homage to somebody — it's like building a monument. Like somebody will say, "Look, this will be your monument when you're not here. This will be standing." And he was a little embarrassed by it, and I was a little embarrassed by it and it was a very strange sort of enigma. I was happy because he was around to see it. And also it's changed completely the whole feeling when he wasn't here anymore — now it really is a tribute to him as he was.

TEACHINGBOOKS: Why did your father go to Tibet?

PETER SIS: I was very close to my parents and when I was four years old, my father, who was in the Army Film Unit, was ordered to go to China to do film. He told my mother he would be back for Christmas, but it was more like three Christmases later. So, he left for China, and the Chinese film sent him to Tibet to document the building of a road to Tibet in the Himalayas. As a little boy, I didn't know where he is, I just knew he was gone.

TEACHINGBOOKS: *Tibet Through the Red Box* is a multi-layered book.

PETER SIS: The book has three different levels. It's a little boy who believes everything his father says. Then it's a diary of the father, which is much more realistic. And then it's a whole backdrop of Tibet and a sort of spiritual feeling.

TEACHINGBOOKS: *The Three Golden Keys* is a letter to your daughter about Prague and your childhood there.

PETER SIS: *The Three Golden Keys* was inspired in part by a meeting I had with Mrs. [Jackie Kennedy] Onassis, who was editor at Doubleday. She had gone to Prague and loved the place, and said, "Why don't you do a book about Prague?"

All of a sudden, I was going back to where I grew up, which was a very intriguing feeling. I was sort of being an explorer in my own life. At the time, my wife and I had just had this wonderful round baby. And I thought, "I don't know if the baby will be speaking Czech. I don't know if she will even be interested going back there." So I said, "I will explain to the baby where I came from and why I am who I am."

In the book, I was trying to describe feelings that I had, like when we came home from school in the afternoon and got a slice of bread with tomatoes and went out to play soccer. It was hard to depict this in the book — you need really to feel the temperature and smell the place. This book, unlike the books about Galileo and Columbus, was not going in the direction of explorers; it was more an introspective book, about going back.

TEACHINGBOOKS: Your daughter was also the inspiration for *Madlenka* and *Madlenka's Dog*.

PETER SIS: Yes. With *Madlenka*, the idea was based on the fact that my daughter, Madeleine, really lived on the block like that and she wanted to share with everybody and people wanted to share stories with her.

I was intrigued how she had very distorted information about different countries, as children do. She had these little snippets that represented the whole world for her. But she actually had so much more information — and more positive information — about the world than I did growing up.

What I was observing in Madeleine was that she was so excited about the whole world she didn't realize all the dangers and terrible things. But children are so excited that there is a world out there that is there to be explored.

Madlenka is made with die cuts [holes in the pages]. I designed it so you have to look through the pages and see her with all that energy — she's sort of bouncing. The serious world is sort of standing there in a rather dull and boring way, and she's this wonderful little color ball of energy bumping around the block. And then she meets someone and gets a little sense of the country the person they are from and the culture they represent, though it's not everything and it's not complex. That was actually a big discussion during the production of the book, because some people said, "You should be more of a teacher and say 'This is how it is.'" I said, "No, no, I want to show how she thinks — that she doesn't know really yet what's happening."

So the idea was to bring the reader to this microcosm on the Earth — that one block on the Earth represents the whole world. This is what I always found so wonderful about New York, and this is what I found to be the biggest disaster after 9/11 — that this is destroyed — that all these different people from different parts of the world are living together and this little girl is connecting them, sort of going around the block and sort of peeking into the different worlds.

And then I was trying to repeat the same thing with the dog in the second book, which is also based in truth. *Madlenka's Dog* is about when Madeleine wanted to have a dog very much and came up with all these signs that said, "I want a dog, I want a dog," like she represents some organization of dog lovers. And I liked the idea that you have these flaps in the pages of the book where you see that everybody she meets was a child who either had a dog like that or they had a dream of having a dog.

TEACHINGBOOKS: How did you come to live in New York City and write children's books?

PETER SIS: I got a lucky break. While still in Prague, I did illustrations, posters, record covers and all kinds of things, and I had one book published — never expecting that I would go full speed and full time into children's books. I came to Los Angeles to make films and it didn't quite happen that way. I was sort of stranded there, trying to figure out what to do, trying to teach and trying to paint.

So I had this one book, which a friend of mine sent to Maurice Sendak, and Maurice Sendak called me in Los Angeles and said, "So you want to be in children's books?" I had no idea that I want to be in children's books, but if Maurice Sendak calls you and says, "You want to be in children's books," and on the top of it you are completely broke, you're don't say, "I don't want to be in children's books." And he said, "Well, if you want to be in children's books, I can introduce you to some editors, but, of course, you have to be on the East Coast. You have to be in New York or Boston." But, Los Angeles was the only place I have been to in America in that point, so I knew I have to get to the East Coast, but I had no money, no way to get to the East Coast.

And at that moment, the head of Milos Forman's *Amadeus* called, and they were just finishing the movie *Amadeus* and they asked me if I would do the poster for the movie. So I did the poster, and they paid me right away — "here's the poster, here's some money." It was enough money to get a secondhand car. I was so excited that I just took off and thought,

“Well, it must be easy to find New York.” So I went through Arizona, I went Texas, and I visiting someone in Texas, and when I was near San Antonio, I said, “It’s about time to turn left to go up.” So I asked the State Trooper in Texas, “Which way to New York?” and he said, “Get out of the car,” and he checked everything because it was a strange question. But that’s how I came to New York, thanks to *Amadeus*.

TEACHINGBOOKS: Several of your books focus on a major historical figure, and each was ahead of his time.

PETER SIS: I was always interested in people who think differently. I think it goes back to my childhood, when I grew up in the country, when everybody was supposed to think the same way. Ever since then, I have had a great affection for people who try to think differently. And I guess I wanted to leave the message that it’s not always to think differently, but it can have great rewards.

I started to appreciate people like Christopher Columbus, who was so determined and persistent and then discovers the New World. Of course, when I started to do research for *Follow the Dream — The Story of Christopher Columbus*, I found out that Columbus was an unbearable person who probably not anybody liked at all because he was just driving them crazy, but that’s maybe part of it how you accomplish some things.

When I started to think about doing *Starry Messenger — Galileo Galilei*, one page was clear in mind — Galileo as one individual standing in front of this sea of Cardinals who are dressed in red. I feel as though that is the picture of me growing up in Czechoslovakia with the pressure of the political system at the time, which was trying to crush the individual.

When I first began *The Tree of Life — A Book Depicting the Life of Charles Darwin*, I knew about his book, *The Origin of the Species* and about his travels on the *The Beagle* to see new animals in new lands. That was my inspiration for the book. But, when I started to look into it, I found that Darwin really traveled on the Beagle only five years and spent the rest of his life sitting and thinking, which is very hard to illustrate.

In all these books, I included the man’s childhood, because I always think it’s important to show that this is just a baby, and it can be any baby — somebody born today can become the next Darwin or Columbus. The world is wonderful that way.

TEACHINGBOOKS: *Follow the Dream*, your book about Christopher Columbus, was the first of these biographical books. What planted the seed?

PETER SIS: In May of 1989, I became a United States citizen. Then five months later, the Berlin Wall and East Bloc fell apart. It was an amazing time because, all of a sudden, everything changed, and I wanted to celebrate somehow. At first, I wanted to do a book on Marco Polo — I love him, but nobody can quite say if Marco Polo’s story is true or not. I wanted to celebrate the fact of somebody coming to the New World, and then Columbus seemed to be just perfectly fitting. So the book was my celebration really, of the walls which came down, of somebody who goes in the blue beautiful ocean and discovers the New World.

TEACHINGBOOKS: Your biographical books are rich with information and details and layers of meaning. *The Tree of Life*, about Charles Darwin, is a good example of this.

PETER SIS: In *The Tree of Life*, I tried to show what was going on in Darwin's life on three different levels. There's his family life; Darwin has a wife and kids, and they have servants and a beautiful estate. Then he had his public life; he's a scientist and he has to publish to make himself more known. The third level is Darwin's private life; he was thinking and pondering over the theory of the origin of species. It took him 25 years to publish the theory. We don't really know what was happening in his head. We just know what he wrote in his diaries.

Darwin was somebody who changed the way we think about ourselves. He wasn't punished for that like Galileo was, but deep down he had his doubts, and I wanted to show the whole process of somebody who has doubts.

TEACHINGBOOKS: You wrote *Starry Messenger*, about Galileo Galilei, for your son, Matej.

PETER SIS: When we were expecting our second child, I thought, "I have to talk about something which is the future, which is the hope," and I had this picture of beginning the book with all these babies being born. I wanted to show that everybody's got some future and there is one child who works to become Galileo Galilei. So, he's a great winner, he's got it all, but then comes the Inquisition saying, "Come on, Galileo, what are you saying here?"

My father always said, "Once you think you have a peacock tail and you start to spread it, somebody will come and cut it off." So it was a message for Matej that when Galileo thinks he's got it all made, then he goes through hard times. Like one day when Matej is 15, I will say, "Look, you try to do what you want, but it might get difficult at some point."

TEACHINGBOOKS: What else appealed to you about the lives of Galileo, Columbus and Darwin?

PETER SIS: When I was young, I was fascinated by people who could go places. I was in a country where I couldn't go anywhere, and I liked people going to the moon and stories about explorers. Galileo was in prison, but he still was able to go places with his mind. And Darwin was fascinating because he combined both things for me. He had that Beagle element, which was truly going places and seeing new things, but then he sits later and it's all happening in his mind as well.

TEACHINGBOOKS: Did your parents encourage you to go places — in your mind as well as physically?

PETER SIS: My father would say things like, "One day you will go to Brazil," but my mother would say, "Wait a minute, let's make sure he has dinner at six o'clock." We have ideas, thanks to him, and things, thanks to her.

TEACHINGBOOKS: You use a very different illustration style in some of your books for the very young: *Fire Truck*, *Trucks Trucks Trucks*, *Ship Ahoy!* and *Dinosaur!*

PETER SIS: I have developed a very time-consuming style for most of my books, but when I used to do film storyboards, and now when I sketch, I do it very simply and I can see

immediate results. These books are my effort to do just the doodles that I do in the beginning and to stop at that.

Fire Truck was the first of these books, and it came about because we lived in an apartment across the street from a fire station, and my son loved fire trucks. The people in fire station were extremely kind to my son. Every time the fire trucks would come out, he would go and scream, "Fire truck, fire truck!" He knew the numbers, he knew the people. It was just so wonderful. There was no use to go into some time-consuming illustration style about fire trucks; I just wanted to catch that moment. I thought, "If I want to do book about fire trucks, I have to do it quickly, because he'll only like fire trucks a short time." This turned out to be true, because he dropped that whole affection at one moment and moved on.

I was trying to do it just with a brush and the red color. I thought, "What is the color of the truck? It's red, white, and black with little touches of yellow. "And I have to say that until today, every time I'm in a bookstore, I have somebody who says, "Oh, he loves fire trucks and it's some fantastic obsession."

Then, I thought, "Oh, this is a great inspiration, what is the next thing he likes?" It was all these bulldozers and trucks, so the next book was *Trucks, Trucks, Trucks*. Then he played at on the couch, pretending it's a ship, so I made a book about all kinds of ships. And then it was the thing with dinosaurs, when he used to sit in the bathtub and play with the dinosaurs.

TEACHINGBOOKS: You mentioned your time-consuming style of illustration. Please describe that style and how you came to illustrate in such a way.

PETER SIS: When I started to draw illustrations for *The New York Times* in 1983, I offered to create my illustrations with hundreds of little dots. I was thinking, "I have to make sure I will get work from *The New York Times* every week so I can pay rent. I could do things in one line, as we were taught in the art school, but everybody else is doing that." I thought that if I drew using just one line, I probably would get illustrations once every month, but if I come in with a style that is completely different from anybody else, they will give work to me more often.

That is exactly what happened. It was irrational thinking, but I locked myself into this situation to do everything with these little dots. Then came the publishers that said, "Can you do it with hundreds of little dots?" And all of a sudden, I was making these little dots and I had no personal life whatsoever, and it goes against the principles of drawing. When professors of drawing or art, ask "Why would you want to do something so strenuous or stiff? Why wouldn't you want to let your hand flow?" I tell them that it's my dream to have my hand flow, but then, psychologically, I lock into these time-consuming pieces.

TEACHINGBOOKS: And yet, your books have a peacefulness about them.

PETER SIS: In all my books, I like to have a space where the reader can relax, where the reader has some open horizon or almost like a window into another dimension, and then the story goes on. The reader can sort of catch their breath, and then I can give more information again.

TEACHINGBOOKS: Your book, *A Small Tall Tale from the Far Far North* reads like a folktale.

PETER SIS: *A Small Tall Tale from the Far Far North* is a very special book to me — it is about the human spirit and endurance.

It's about a real man whom I learned about when I was a little boy. He was a Czechoslovakian hero. When hardly anybody ever left the country, this man, Jan Welzl, decided to go through Russia and through Siberia and ended up as chief of all the Eskimos. He saw that everybody was stealing money from them exploiting them in the fur trade. So, he took all the furs and went to San Francisco in a ship to sell the furs for much more money than the traders were giving the Eskimos. Well, the ship sunk off shore from San Francisco and they fished him out. He is tall with blonde hair and he says, "I'm the chief of all Eskimos," and they thought, "He's a nut." They deported him and he couldn't get anybody to believe him. So, he went back to Czechoslovakia, and he became very popular — there was a book about him, he had a radio program and they called him "Uncle Eskimo." I grew up with his stories. My book was a simplification of this.

TEACHINGBOOKS: What non-book projects are you working on?

PETER SIS: I'm doing a glass mosaic for the subway station in New York City. It will be on 86th Street and Lexington. There's a factory that makes mosaics — it's something I didn't know anything about. It's wonderful, because we take these little glass stones and we put together little pictures.

Also, I just did five little films for *Sesame Street*. It's a great lesson for me, because for 20 years now I have been in children's books, and I had wanted to get back to animation. These films about Madlenka are a very good lesson for me about how even five minutes of animation takes such a long time to create.

TEACHINGBOOKS: How did *The Train of States* originate?

PETER SIS: The idea for *The Train of States* came from a hot summer afternoon in Baraboo, Wisconsin when my family took a trip to this Museum of Barnum & Bailey, [the Circus World Museum] and they have these wonderful old wagons and I remembered how much I loved the circus since I was a little boy. I was very impressed with people refurbishing and repairing these wagons that served at the turn of the century. There was no television, no radio then, so they had wonderfully painted caravans that said, "here we are" and everybody knew the circus was in town.

I thought, "What if I did a book of states?" Each state has its own caravan with its flower and its animals and something special on it.

TEACHINGBOOKS: Describe a typical workday.

PETER SIS: I get up in the morning and I get on the train to New York City, which takes me 40 minutes to get to Grand Central. And then I get on the subway and I go three stops downtown and I come to the studio before 10:00 and then I work all day on my drawings through until 5:00. Then I go home and have dinner with Terry and the kids.

What I like most is the process of developing the ideas and sketching. That's fun. That's not fun for my wife, because then I wake up in the middle of the night and have some ideas — it's a time of turmoil, and that's great. And then we talk with the editor and get it

going. And then comes the time of torture really — the execution of the book, when I have to do it.

TEACHINGBOOKS: What do you get out of creating books for children?

PETER SIS: The wonderful thing about being in children's books is that you realize that you are satisfying yourself as an artist, but at the same time, you can be passing some message or some knowledge to somebody who might need it.

Books by Peter Sís

- HAPPY TROLL, THE (written by Max Bolliger), Henry Holt and Company, 2005
- TRAIN OF STATES, THE, Greenwillow Books/ HarperCollins Publishers, 2004
- TREE OF LIFE, THE: A BOOK DEPICTING THE LIFE OF CHARLES DARWIN, Frances Foster Books / Farrar Straus Giroux, 2003
- ANIMAL SENSE (written by Diane Ackerman), Alfred A. Knopf, 2003
- WICKED, WICKED LADIES IN THE HAUNTED HOUSE, THE (written by Mary Chase), Alfred A. Knopf, 2003
- MADLENKA'S DOG, Frances Foster Books / Farrar Straus Giroux, 2002
- SCRANIMALS (written by Jack Prelutsky), Greenwillow Books / HarperCollins Publishers, 2002
- BALLERINA!, Greenwillow Books / HarperCollins Publishers, 2001
- LE MARCHAND D'AILES — THE LITTLE WING GIVER (written by Jacques Taravant), Henry Holt and Company, 2001
- DINOSAUR!, Greenwillow Books / HarperCollins Publishers, 2000
- MADLENKA, Frances Foster Books / Farrar Straus Giroux, 2000
- FAUST (written by Johann Wolfgang Goethe), Farrar Straus Giroux, 2000
- DEEP PLAY (written by Diane Ackerman), Random House, Inc., 1999
- GARGOYLE ON THE ROOF, THE (written by Jack Prelutsky), Greenwillow Books / HarperCollins Publishers, 1999
- SHIP AHOY!, Greenwillow Books / HarperCollins Publishers, 1999
- TALE OF THE UNKNOWN ISLAND, THE (written by Jose Saramago), Harcourt Inc., 1999
- TRUCKS TRUCKS TRUCKS, Greenwillow Books / HarperCollins Publishers, 1999
- FIRE TRUCK, Greenwillow Books / HarperCollins Publishers, 1998
- TIBET THROUGH THE RED BOX, Frances Foster Books / Farrar Straus Giroux, 1998
- SLEEP SAFE, LITTLE WHALE (written by Miriam Schlein), Greenwillow Books / HarperCollins Publishers, 1997
- MONDAY'S TROLL (written by Jack Prelutsky), Greenwillow Books / HarperCollins Publishers, 1996
- STARRY MESSENGER: GALILEO GALILEI, Frances Foster Books / Farrar Straus Giroux, 1996
- RUMPELSTILTSKIN (retold by Christopher Noel), Simon & Schuster Children's Publishing, 1995
- THIRTEENTH FLOOR — A GHOST STORY, THE (written by Sid Fleischman), Greenwillow Books / HarperCollins Publishers, 1995
- STILL MORE STORIES TO SOLVE (written by George Shannon), Greenwillow Books / HarperCollins Publishers, 1994
- THREE GOLDEN KEYS, THE, Farrar Straus Giroux, 1994

- DRAGONS ARE SINGING TONIGHT, THE, (written by Jack Prelutsky), Greenwillow Books / HarperCollins Publishers, 1993
- KOMODO!, Greenwillow Books / HarperCollins Publishers, 1993
- SMALL TALL TALE FROM THE FAR FAR NORTH, A, Farrar Straus Giroux, 1993
- OCEAN WORLD, AN, Greenwillow Books / HarperCollins Publishers, 1992
- FOLLOW THE DREAM: THE STORY OF CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS, Alfred A. Knopf, 1991
- ALGONQUIN LITERARY QUIZ BOOK, THE (compiled by Louis D. Rubin, Jr.), Algonquin, 1990
- BEACH BALL, Greenwillow Books / HarperCollins Publishers, 1990
- MIDNIGHT HORSE, THE (written by Sid Fleischman), Greenwillow Books / HarperCollins Publishers, 1990
- MORE STORIES TO SOLVE (written by George Shannon), Greenwillow Books / HarperCollins Publishers, 1990
- GHOST IN THE NOONDAY SUN, THE (written by Sid Fleischman), Greenwillow Books / HarperCollins Publishers, 1989
- GOING UP!, Greenwillow Books / HarperCollins Publishers, 1989
- HALLOWEEN — STORIES AND POEMS (edited by Caroline Feller Bauer), J.B. Lippincott, 1989
- ALPHABET SOUP (written by Kate Banks), Alfred A. Knopf, 1988
- SCAREBIRD, THE (written by Sid Fleischman), Greenwillow Books / HarperCollins Publishers, 1988
- WAVING, Greenwillow Books / HarperCollins Publishers, 1988
- AFTER GOOD-NIGHT (written by Monica Mayper), HarperCollins Publishers, 1987
- CITY NIGHT (written by Eve Rice), Greenwillow Books / HarperCollins Publishers, 1987
- JED AND THE SPACE BANDITS (written by Jean and Claudio Marzollo), Dial Books for Young Readers / Penguin Putnam, 1987
- RAINBOW RHINO, Alfred A. Knopf, 1987
- HIGGLEDY-PIGGLEDY (verses and pictures by Myra Cohn Livingston), Margaret K. McElderry Books / Simon & Schuster Children's Publishing, 1986
- OAF (written by Julia Cunningham), Alfred A. Knopf, 1986
- THREE YELLOW DOGES (written by Caron Lee Cohen), Greenwillow Books / HarperCollins Publishers, 1986
- WHIPPING BOY, THE (written by Sid Fleischman), Greenwillow Books / HarperCollins Publishers, 1986
- STORIES TO SOLVE (written by George Shannon), Greenwillow Books / HarperCollins Publishers, 1985
- BEAN BOY (written by George Shannon), Greenwillow Books / HarperCollins Publishers, 1984
- EINE ZWERGENGESCHICHTE / THE LITTLE SINGER (written by Max Bolliger), Bohem Press, 1983
- KUZE NA ZIP (written by Bedrich Stehno) Ceskoslovensky spisovatel, 1982
- O PALECKOVI / THUMBLING — FAIRY TALES BY THE BROTHERS GRIMM, Albatros, 1981
- BALTISCHE MARCHEN / BALTIC FAIRY TALES (retold by Milos Maly), Artia, 1981
- ZIZKOVSKÉ ROMANCE / ROMANCES FROM ZIZKOV (written by Vladimír Kalina), Ceskoslovensky spisovatel, 1980
- DIE HEXE LAKRITZE UND RINO RHINOZEROS / THE LICORICE WITCH AND THE RHINO RHINOCEROS (written by Eveline Hasler), Benziger Verlag, 1979

- DER BUCHSTABENKONIG UND DI HEXE LAKRITZE / THE KING OF LETTERS AND THE LICORICE WITCH (written by Eveline Hasler), Benziger Verlag, 1977
- JANICEK A MARENKA / HANSEL AND GRETEL — FAIRY TALES BY THE BROTHERS GRIMM, Albatros, 1977

Jacket Art by Peter Sís

- THIS PLACE I KNOW: POEMS OF COMFORT (written by Georgia Heard), Candlewick Press, 2002
- HOBBIT, THE (written by J.R.R. Tolkien), Houghton Mifflin, 2001
- WIND SINGER, THE (written by William Nicholson), Hyperion, 2000
- WRINKLE IN TIME, A (written by Madeleine L'Engle), Random House Children's Publishing, 1997

Posters by Peter Sís

- Metropolitan Transportation Authority, New York, NY, 1997, 2002
- International Jazz Festival in Rennes, France, 1997
- Children's Book Council, New York, NY, 1989 and 1996
- Milos Forman's film AMADEUS, 1984

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