

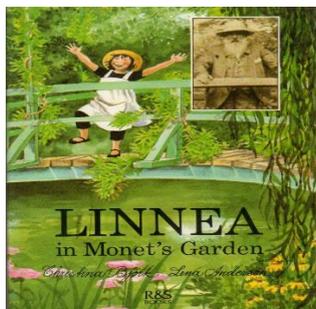
Love God, Love others Let your light shine.

Books to Inspire – Art

[Linnea in Monet's Garden](#)

Age Range: 6 and up

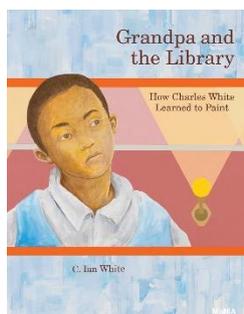
Starting with a personal favorite: I was *obsessed* with this book as a kid. It's the story of a little girl named Linnea who befriends a kindly neighbor named Mr. Bloom, who teaches her all about the painter Claude Monet and the “blobby” style of painting called Impressionism. The story culminates in the two of them taking a trip to Paris, where they end up visiting not just Monet's house and gardens in Giverny, but the Orangerie and the Musée d'Orsay, too. It's all very charming and features a good deal of art-historical nerding out. It also had the effect of instilling in me an intense fascination with painting, France, and travel in general—a positive outcome, in my estimation.



[Grandpa and the Library: How Charles White Learned to Paint](#)

Age Range: 6 and up

When I was little, I liked stories about the logistics of *how* people did things or got good at things. This lovingly illustrated book does just that, through the story of how a young Charles White taught himself how to draw and observe the world through picture books in the Chicago Public Library, and went on to become a singular artistic voice of the 20th century. Published in conjunction with the Charles White retrospective at New York's Museum of Modern Art in 2018, this 40-page volume offers a wonderful introduction to the making of a great painter, and includes an appendix of additional biographical information and suggested reading for adults, too.

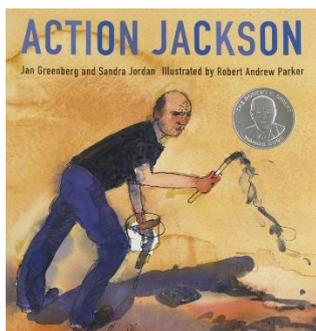


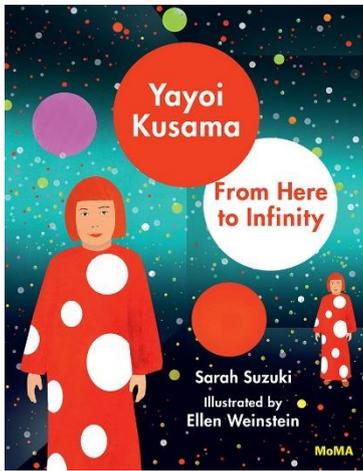
[Action Jackson](#)

Age Range: 6–10 years

Jackson Pollock might not be the most obvious choice for a children's book protagonist—what with his drinking problem and untimely end—but this punchy book succeeds in making him an age-appropriate and compelling subject. It does so by narrowing its focus to a singular period in the artist's life: when he painted his magnum opus, *Lavender Mist*.

“Some of this account is imagined,” the foreword cautions. “We don't know if the sequence of events during months of May and June 1950 was exactly as we have described it.” But the authors assure us they based their narrative on first-hand accounts, and the resulting story is vivid and full of great little details. I also love the wiry, frenetic line work of the accompanying illustrations to capture Pollock's macho energy.

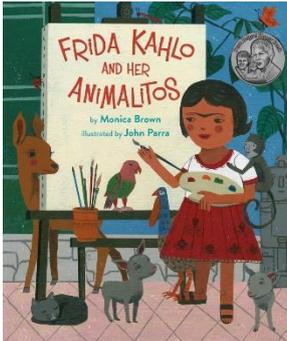




[Yayoi Kusama: From Here to Infinity](#)

Age Range: 4–8 years

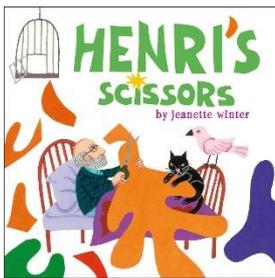
Yayoi Kusama's pumpkins and polka dots sometimes feel like the stuff of imaginative childhood dreams—an idea the authors have lovingly taken advantage of here. High-contrast illustrations by Ellen Weinstein capture the playful side of Kusama's art, while the story, expertly written by Sarah Suzuki, a MoMA curator of drawings and prints, tells a kid-friendly version of the artist's life. Though the book chooses to largely side-step some of the more challenging elements of Kusama's biography, it still manages to bring her art to life in a way that's accessible, engaging, and inspiring.



[Frida Kahlo and Her Animalitos](#)

Age Range: 4–8 years

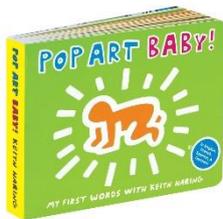
Take a zoological journey into the world of Frida Kahlo, where the artist's pets take center stage. [Frida Kahlo and Her Animalitos](#) explores the personal and symbolic relationships of animals in Kahlo's life and art, drawing from both her biography and the content of her narrative paintings. If your child is obsessed with the creatures of the natural world, then this book is likely to be a hit. The best part of it all is the book's art, for which illustrator John Parra painted on rough wood panels for an especially warm and textural feel. Note that there's also [a Spanish-language version](#), too!



[Henri's Scissors](#)

Age Range: 3 and up

Written for very young children, Henri Matisse appears as an almost wizardly figure in this book, discovering a magic wand in the form of a pair of humble scissors that allowed him to transform coloured paper into some of his greatest masterpieces. It gets a little woo-woo at the end—Matisse dies and ascending to heaven on a cavalry of his colourful shapes—but it's a sweet introduction to one of the 20th century's modernist giants.



[Pop Art Baby!](#)

Age Range: 0+

For the most youthful art fans in your life, look no further than the enthusiastically titled [Pop Art Baby!](#) This sturdy board book is made of cardboard with rounded edges—perfect for the tactile, chewing-on-things studio practice of many artist babies—and introduces universal themes of love and family in multiple languages and through the form of iconic Keith Haring drawings.

Arty parents will enjoy the Pop Art pedigree, babies will enjoy the bright pages.