

Carolyn Ngo
California Museum's Dreamers Challenge

Dreaming a Dream for You

Remember the time when bunnies from space were just as real as the steamed carrots Mom cooked for dinner? That was childhood. That was when a cluster of dreams made up reality and a stuffed bunny was a best friend. However, when childhood crossed over into adulthood, becoming a superhero or a princess was no longer an acceptable dream. Colorful dreams began to fade into black and white: the common goal was to become a rich doctor or get into a prestigious college. I want to help dreams be colorful, because black and white ones are boring.

When I first discovered that I had a dream, the shaky sigh I breathed out could only be classified as utter relief. I spent the past few years constantly sitting down on my bed wondering what I was going to do with my life. I didn't have a dream, it was as simple as that, yet I never wanted to admit it. It was why I always said I wanted to be a doctor, it seemed pitiful to be without a dream. I'd spend hours upon hours dedicated to whittling away at sleepless nights, shifting through meaningless jobs and career paths, deeming money as adequate motivation. But it was never enough. Sometimes I was mystified as to where the little girl that so eagerly wished to become an artist went. I wanted her to come back. Many times trying to figure out what I wanted in life was far more difficult than three pages of Trigonometry homework. It was painful knowing that I didn't have a certain direction in life, so I questioned others about theirs for inspiration. I found that numerous didn't have dreams either.

Questioning the people I knew saddened me. I had some friends tell me that they wanted to be a veterinarian or a politician, but that was it. None of the answers were ever

in great detail. Roughly half told me “I don’t know” as if it were the favorable answer. Many didn’t know what college they wanted to go to, what they wanted to major in, or what they wanted to do in general. The main objective was to simply get into a good college, beyond that was uncharted territory. However, all of us without dreams had one striking feature in common. We all envied those who knew exactly what they dreamed of. We all wanted to be like those who knew so surely what they wanted in life. We all wanted to dream.

When we are kids, we dream of the wildest things. We dream of Bigfoot pouncing into school to steal the swing set and Winnie the Pooh popping out of the television to say hello. We dream of becoming ghost busters on the prowl and changing into fluttering fairies from another land. As we gradually grow up; however, our dreams begin to change. It’s subtle, so we don’t notice it. When I graduated from Elementary School, there was the graduation ceremony where all the fifth graders had to go up to the podium in front of this massive crowd and say what they were going to be. We all thought our dreams were each going to be unique, but all of the responses were repeated multiple times by other students. Although none of the fifth graders said anything, I think we all knew we weren’t certain of our dreams anymore.

Dreams change due to many reasons, but experiencing life is a big part of it. Hardly any get the chance to honestly think about the future. Before a person knows it, the most important thing isn’t playing tag with his best buddy anymore, but filling out a lengthy application to a stern university. Students have a Calculus exam the next day, or a Physics project to complete, or several lengthy assignments to fill out. Even after all of that, there’s football or band practice, volunteer work, and home duties. Many of the

students I questioned were seniors and they still didn't know what college they wanted to go to.

Some children and adults are equally unsure of their dreams. If anything adults have a harder time figuring out and fulfilling their dreams. They might have kids to take care of or a rocky relationship to balance or they suddenly discovered that what they're doing isn't what they thought they wanted. My former teacher majored in French, became a dentist, and then a taught Chemistry. I never got to ask her what her dreams were, but I'm sure they must have changed along the way. As for children, I believe they have the greatest potential for dreams. They're young and eager, the world is their playground. But I know it can be hard on them too. I asked my twelve year old brother recently about what he wanted to be. He said, "I don't know." I couldn't have felt more devastated knowing my own brother was struggling, too.

I aspire to create a club called the Children's Book Club. I understand that it will take much effort and time to become a published author, therefore as I work towards my dream, I will create a club dedicated to creating children's books and aiding people towards their dreams. The club will help its members to create storybooks over a wide spectrum of topics, in order for members to express their dreams in a unique way. In the process of creating books, members can share their work with others for critique and commentary. Members can also learn how to bind their own stories together into an actual book. It may be kept as a keepsake, donated to the club, or given to a charity or the classrooms of schools for others to enjoy. Members may also allow usage of the completed book to the club for replication to be used in the advertising of the club and for promotion to new members. The Children's Book Club will fundraise for the club by

selling bookmarks, copies of books created by the members, and trinkets the club creates. The club will also hold contests for its members. There will be an art, essay, and storybook contest dedicated to the theme of dreams, talent and quality, and most inspiring. Winners of the contests will be chosen to have their books reproduced for fundraisers. My club will bring dreamers together, encourage the dreams of others, and introduce dreams to those unsure.

My dream is to become a children's storybook author and illustrator. Through illustrated books I want to help guide people through limitless journeys, fantastic dreams, and moving characters in hopes of leading them closer to their own paths. In each and every book, I want to spark hope and inspiration to those whose dreams are unclear. I dream of writing stories for children to be excited about, for them to be motivated by. However, my children's books are not limited to children, they are created for everyone. They can be read by the children or the adults and the elderly or the teenagers, because everyone can dream. Children's books can be read on various levels and can touch anyone. If I can bring any one person just an inch closer to knowing their destination, I'll be satisfied. When I write about a courageous rabbit racing through a lively forest, I hope that a child will dream of becoming an explorer. If I write about a pigeon getting lost in New York, I hope an adult will become a helpful tour guide in China.

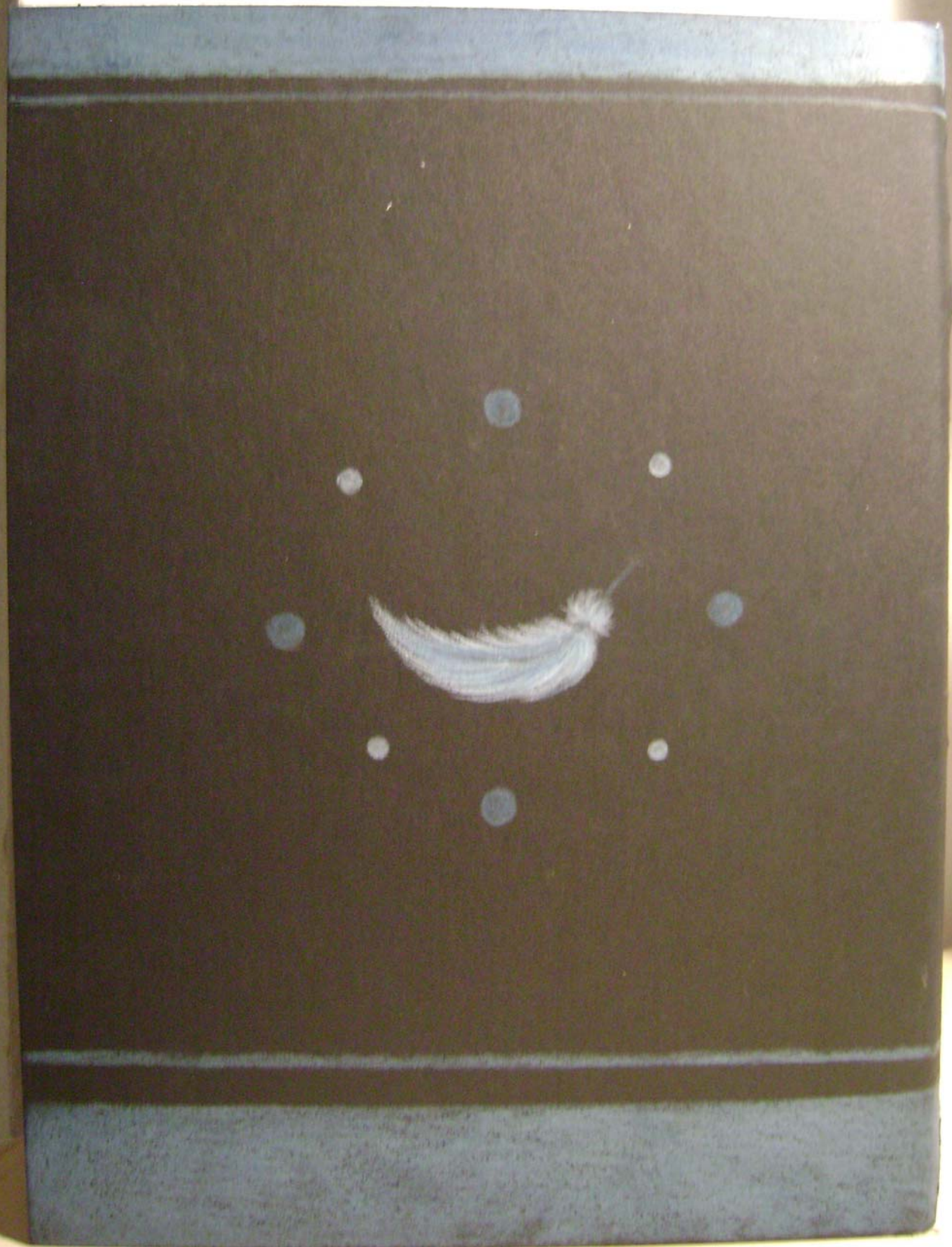
If a picture is worth a thousand words, then a storybook is worth much, much more. I believe that my books and my club will one day reach across the globe, to everyone that dreams. I may not be curing a devastating disease, advancing technology, or bringing groundbreaking research to the table, but I believe the people I inspire will.

Dreaming a Dream for You



by:
Carolyn
Ngo







Dreaming a Dream for You



by
Carolyn
Ngo



