

The Man with the Violin

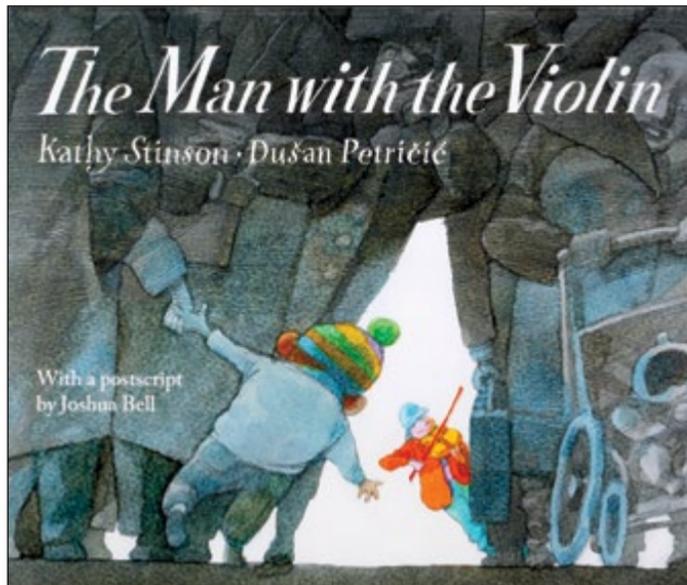
BY KATHY STINSON, ILLUSTRATIONS BY DUSAN PETRICIC

The scene is a Metro station in Washington, DC. The characters are a little boy, his mom and a violinist. The context is a visual and aural swirl of music. Dylan, the little boy, stops to listen. Meanwhile, his mom tugs at his hand, hurrying him to catch the train.

The Man with the Violin is a lyrical story based on real-life events. The violinist was the world-renowned Joshua Bell, who one day in 2007 played in a Metro station for 45 minutes. Only a handful of people stopped to listen for a few moments. The rest rushed on. The fictional little boy draws the reader into his enchantment with the soaring notes of the music. The vocabulary is vivid with melodic words and the illustrations depict the eloquent rhythm and clear sound that only a violin can make. Working in watercolour and using smooth, swirling brush strokes, the artist depicts not only the sound of the music but also the bustle of the subway station. Dylan can hear the music in his head throughout his day, and by the end of it he makes his mother stop and really hear it, too.

In an afterword, Bell sums up the importance of music with a quote from Plato: “Music gives soul to the universe, wings to the mind, flight to the imagination and life to everything.” *The Man with the Violin* is a rich springboard for creative learning across the curriculum, great for all age groups. It’s a must for any classroom or school library.

Sarah Lynn Frost Hunter, OCT,
is a Grade 3 teacher at Kindree PS in the Peel DSB.



The Man with the Violin, Annick Press,
Toronto, 2013, hardcover, ISBN 978-1-55451-565-3,
28 pages, \$19.95, distributed by Firefly Books,
annickpress.com