

FUZUÊ!

Invention & Imagination in the Art of Roger Mello



Roger Mello, Artwork for *Maria Teresa* (Global Editora). Collection of the artist. © 1996 Roger Mello.

A TRAVELING EXHIBITION

Organized by

The ERIC CARLE MUSEUM OF PICTURE BOOK ART



The Eric Carle Museum of Picture Book Art presents *Fuzuê! Invention & Imagination in the Art of Roger Mello*, which is now available for travel. The exhibition in the summer and fall at The Carle was Mello's first exhibition in the United States for the Brazilian artist, who won the prestigious Hans Christian Andersen Award—the highest international honor for picture book illustration—in 2014.

The exhibition title, *Fuzuê*, comes from a Portuguese expression that captures a uniquely Brazilian sense of playful commotion. Mello's art embodies that spirit, as he invites readers to have fun and embrace the chaos of the world, but to also engage in reflection and acts of care. He takes inspiration from Brazilian visual culture and global folk art, and his illustrative style ranges from bold, contrasting two-color linework to detailed graphic renditions and highly textured collages. Mello particularly shines as a chronicler of the natural world.

Organized by associate curator Isabel Ruiz Cano, guests to the exhibition will enjoy original art from 12 picture books, including yet-to-be-published titles. A collection of book dummies, sculptures, and prints provide insight into Mello's multi-faceted creative process. The introductory panel and section labels have been translated in Portuguese.



About Roger Mello

Roger Mello has illustrated over 100 titles—22 of which he also wrote—and his unique style and adroit sense of color continues to push the boundaries of children’s book illustration. Mello has won numerous awards for writing and illustrating, including three of IBBY’s Luis Jardim Awards, the Best Children’s Book 2002 International Award, and the 2014 Hans Christian Andersen Award. In 2018, *You Can’t Be Too Careful!* was named a Batchelder Honor Book by the American Library Association.

Roger Mello creates books that ignite readers’ imaginations. He takes inspiration from Brazilian visual culture and folk art, and his illustrative style ranges from bold, contrasting two-color linework (*João by a Thread*), to detailed graphic renditions (*Maria Teresa*), and highly textured collages (*Charcoal Boys*). Mello’s passion for picture books is apparent in

his inventive approach. He makes each artwork by hand to the dimension of the published page, incorporating story elements into decorative endpapers, cutouts, and double-page spreads.

Working in a diversity of styles, Mello crafts each artwork to scale, incorporating story elements into decorative endpapers, cutouts, and double-page spreads. He travels extensively for work and inspiration. When asked about the location of his studio, he laughs and says it’s all around the world. His studio may be a kitchen table in Brasilia, a hotel room desk in Korea, or the floor of a friend’s house in Chicago. He often uses housepaint for his art because it is vibrant and easily found in hardware stores around the world.

Mello shifts styles to complement different narratives. He introduces readers to a colorful cast of characters in *You Can’t Be Too Careful!*, one of his earliest picture books. He employs delicate linework in *João by a Thread*, blazing neon colors in *Charcoal Boys*, and plastic bag collage in *Meninos do Mangue*. Most evident is his inherent appreciation for nature. He populates his art with flora and fauna from around the globe and even collages plant specimens into some illustrations, as he did in *Jardins*. In *Feather*, he paints vivid renditions of birds, like cranes and flamingos, and positions them within the book’s long horizontal format.



About the Exhibition

This is Roger Mello's first major exhibition in the United States. The exhibition title, Fuzuê, comes from a Portuguese expression that captures a uniquely Brazilian sense of playful commotion. Mello's art embodies that spirit, as his vibrant artwork invites readers to make unexpected connections and notice the details of the world around them—to have fun and embrace the chaos, but to also engage in reflection and acts of care.

Exhibition Themes and Throughlines

The exhibition is divided into four themes

Picturing Brazil

1

Many of Mello's books provide engaging introductions to Brazilian history and culture. Several comment on the country's contemporary social justice issues.

The Theater of the Page

2

A sense of drama accompanies Roger Mello's stories—something that makes complete sense when one considers his prolific work as a playwright and dramaturge!

Observing the Natural World

3

Mello shines as a chronicler of the natural world, encouraging readers to notice and care for the plants and animals around them.

Connecting with World Cultures

4

Mello lives a peripatetic life, travelling often for work and inspiration. Mello has collaborated internationally, publishing titles with authors Cao Wenxuan in China and Roseana Murray of Brazil.

He made history as the first Latin American winner of the prestigious Hans Christian Andersen Award (2014).





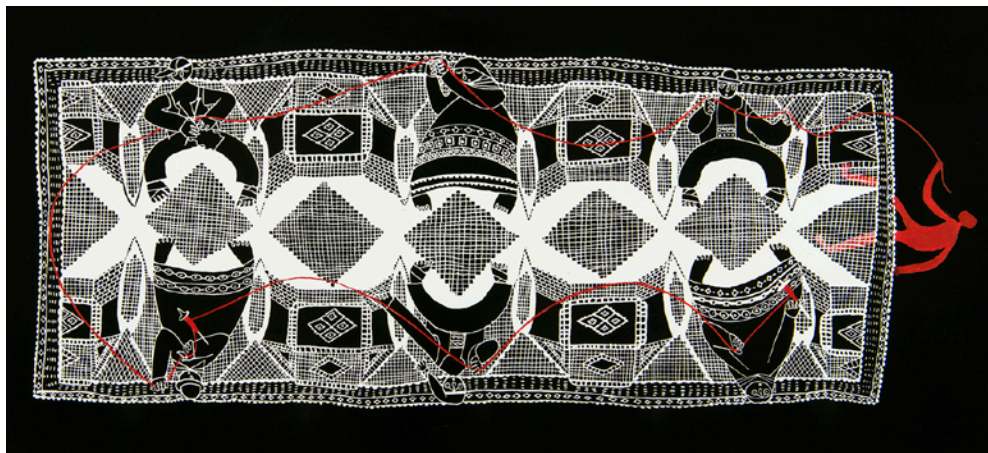
About The Eric Carle Museum

Founded in 2002, **The Eric Carle Museum of Picture Book Art** is the international champion of picture book art. Situated on 7.5 acres in Amherst, Massachusetts, The Carle houses a rich and deep collection of art of more than 300 picture book artists, including Eric Carle (*The Very Hungry Caterpillar*), and illuminates its collection through exhibitions, education, programming, and art-making—making it a critical resource for picture book artists and authors, and art-loving communities locally, nationally, and abroad. The Carle’s mission is to elevate picture book art and inspire a love of art, art creation, and reading. Since opening its doors more than 20 years ago, The Carle has welcomed more than one million visitors—plus more than four million additional museumgoers who have enjoyed its touring exhibitions around the world. Learn more at www.carlemuseum.org



Featured Art and Objects

Roger Mello, Artwork for
Griso, The One and Only
(Elsewhere Editions).
Collection of the artist.
© 2015 Roger Mello.



Roger Mello, Artwork
for *João by a Thread*
(Elsewhere Editions).
Collection of the artist.
© 2006 Roger Mello.



Featured Art and Objects



Roger Mello, Artwork for *Charcoal Boys* (Elsewhere Editions). Collection of the artist. © 2009 Roger Mello.

Roger Mello, Artwork for *Feather* by Cao Wenxuan (Elsewhere Editions). Collection of the artist. © 2017 Roger Mello.



Roger Mello, Artwork for *Contradança* (Companhia das Letrinhas). Collection of the artist. © 2011 Roger Mello.



Installation Images





Exhibition Contents

The exhibition comprises 83 original works of art as well as sculptures, dummy books and related ephemera.

All artwork is professionally framed and includes hanging hardware and security plates for installation. Exhibition text (in English and Portuguese) is provided as a Word document; it is the borrower's responsibility to print labels and exhibition graphics. Gallery cases are not included, though object mounts can be sent on request.

Organizer: The Eric Carle Museum of Picture Book Art

Curator: Isable Ruiz Cano

Shipping and Insurance: All artwork must travel crated via a fine arts shipper approved by The Carle. A Carle courier may be required to oversee unpacking, condition checks, installation, and lighting. It is the borrowing institutions' responsibility to cover all transportation and insurance costs (insurance values will be provided). A certificate of insurance is required.

Gallery Requirements: Borrowing institutions must send an AAM Standard Facility Report and meet the following requirements: ability to control and maintain a stable gallery environment (temperature of 70 degrees F +/- 2, relative humidity of 50% +/- 5%); ability to control and maintain light levels at five-to-seven-foot candles; and 24-hour security monitoring. Ideal gallery size is 1,000 square feet, or approximately 100 linear feet.

Media: The Carle will provide 10-12 high resolution images with cleared permissions to use for publicity and exhibition graphics.

Dates: The exhibition is now available to travel beginning May 2025.

Participation Fee: \$30,000 for three-month venue. Crating, shipping, insurance, and courier expenses are separate from the Participation Fee.

Contact: Jennifer Schantz,
Executive Director

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Roger Mello, Artwork for *Sherjahaan* by Yun Dai (Astra).
Collection of the artist. © 2024 Roger Mello

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