

The Art of Grace Lin

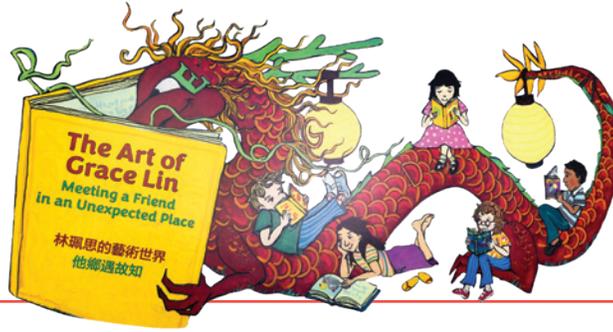
Meeting a Friend
in an Unexpected Place



Organized by
The Eric Carle Museum of Picture Book Art
Amherst, MA

The Art of Grace Lin

Meeting a Friend in an Unexpected Place



About The Exhibition

The exhibition draws its title from one of the “four great happinesses” in Chinese tradition—“meeting a friend in an unexpected place”—a leitmotif that speaks to the serendipity, delight, and cross-cultural connections embedded in Grace Lin’s work.

Over a 25-year career, Lin has produced more than 30 books—including picture books, board books, early readers, and middle-grade novels—and has been honored with the Newbery Honor, Caldecott Honor, Geisel Honor, and the Children’s Literature Legacy Award.

This retrospective invites visitors to “meet” Grace Lin’s imaginative worlds—in which culture, tradition, food, myth, identity and friendship all play vital roles—and to explore how her work offers windows and mirrors into childhood, family, Asian American identity, and creative imagination.

By showcasing original art, sketches, manuscripts, videos and immersive environments, the exhibition offers host venues the opportunity to engage a wide range of audiences: from picture-book fans and students to family audiences and educators exploring representation in children’s literature.

About the Museum

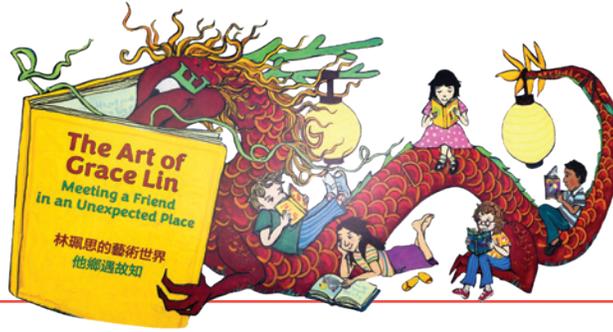
Founded in 2002, The Eric Carle Museum of Picture Book Art is the international champion of picture book art. Situated on 7.5 acres in Amherst, Massachusetts, The Carle cares for more than 20,000 works of art by than 320 picture book artists, including Eric Carle (*The Very Hungry Caterpillar*), and 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.



Grace Lin, Illustration for *Bringing in the New Year* (Knopf Books).
Courtesy of R. Michelson Galleries. © 2008 Grace Lin.

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Structure and Key Content

The exhibition is organized thematically into seven sections (rather than strictly chronological) to highlight recurring threads in Lin's work such as cultural tradition, food, myth/folklore, artistic process, and imaginative journeys.

Exhibition sections include:

- Celebrating Culture & Traditions
- Ling & Ting (the early reader twin-characters)
- The Stories of Food (illustrations from *The Ugly Vegetables*, *Dim Sum for Everyone!*, *Chinese Menu*)
- Myths & Journeys (Lin's middle-grade fantasy novels such as *Where the Mountain Meets the Moon*, *The Gate*, *The Girl*, and *the Dragon*)
- Modern Mom Myths
- Grace Lin's Studio (an immersive reading nook/drawing-space inspired by Lin's attic studio)
- Adventures Through Imagination



Grace Lin, Illustration for *One is a Drummer: A Book of Numbers* by Roseanne Thong (Amicus). Collection of the artist. © 2004 Grace Lin.

Interactive and immersive elements:

- In the “Stories of Food” section visitors might sit at a round table, choose a book from a child-sized dim sum cart, respond to fortune cookie prompts and hang their drawings on the wall.
- The studio section recreates Lin's own art-space, including bookshelves, window seat, and studio materials as inspiration for drawing and storytelling.
- Family-friendly labels accompany the exhibition, placed lower for younger visitors, translated bilingually (English & Traditional Chinese) to reflect Lin's heritage and multilingual audiences.

Highlights:

- More than 120 works (original art, sketches, manuscripts, videos) in the current iteration at The Eric Carle Museum.
- Vibrant colour palettes, patterned graphic design elements drawn from Lin's illustrations and cultural motifs (e.g., jewel-toned blue walls in the myth section).
- Multilingual text in standard and traditional Chinese.
- Engagement around Asian American representation in children's literature: Lin, as a child, rarely saw characters who looked like her, a motivating impulse behind her work.

Featured Objects and Art

Grace Lin, Illustration for *A Big Mooncake for Little Star* (Little, Brown Books). Collection of the artist. © 2018 Grace Lin.



Grace Lin, Illustration for *The Ugly Vegetables* (Charlesbridge). Collection of the artist. © 1999 Grace Lin.



Grace Lin, Illustration for *Chinese Menu: The History, Myths, and Legends Behind Your Favorite Foods* (Little, Brown Books). Collection of the artist. © 2023 Grace Lin.

Grace Lin, Illustration for *Bringing in the New Year* (Knopf Books). Archives & Special Collections, University of Connecticut Library. © 2008 Grace Lin.



Featured Objects and Art

continued

Grace Lin, Illustration for *A Big Bed for Little Snow* (Little, Brown Books).
Collection of the artist. © 2019 Grace Lin.



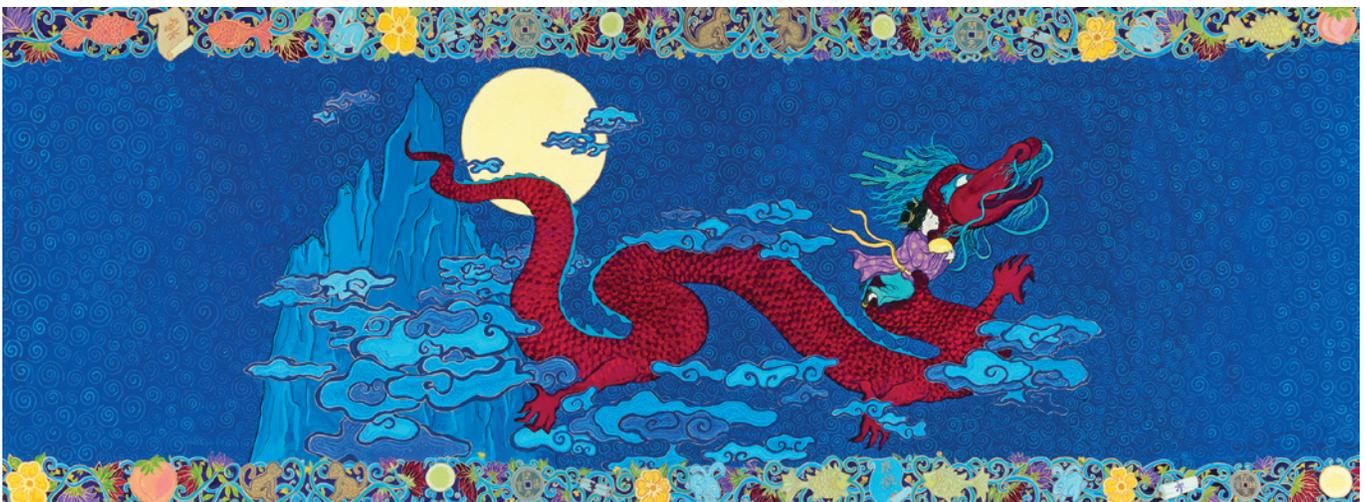
Grace Lin, Illustration for *Ling & Ting Together in All Weather* (Little, Brown Books). Courtesy of R. Michelson Galleries.
© 2015 Grace Lin.



Grace Lin, Illustration for *Once Upon a Book* by Grace Lin and Kate Messner (Little, Brown Books).
Collection of the artist. © 2022 Grace Lin.



Grace Lin, Illustration for *Where the Mountain Meets the Moon* (Little, Brown Books). Courtesy of R. Michelson Galleries. © 2009 Grace Lin.

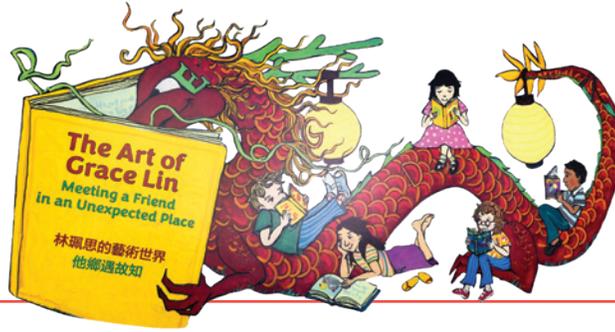


Installation Images



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Audience and Institutional Benefits

By hosting this exhibition, an institution will gain:

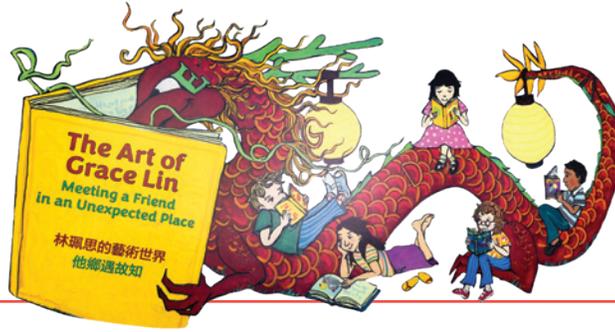
- Access to a high-visibility retrospective of a major children’s-book creator whose work spans decades and formats (picture books, early readers, middle grade).
- Appeal to broad audiences: children, families, schools, librarians, educators, picture-book aficionados, multicultural audiences.
- Enhanced community engagement opportunities, particularly for Asian American cultural representation, diversity in children’s literature, family story-sharing, and food-culture themes.
- Media and promotional potential: the exhibition has already garnered press coverage in major children’s-book venues (e.g., The Horn Book) and radio/podcast exposure (e.g., WAMC “The Roundtable” episode).
- Built-in educational frameworks: interactive experiences, art-making components, multilingual text, and tie-ins with Lin’s books make for strong school and library outreach.
- Flexibility in programming: Host institutions can tailor interactive elements, workshops and outreach locally to align with their mission and community.

Grace Lin, Illustration for *The Ugly Vegetables* (Charlesbridge). Collection of the artist. © 1999 Grace Lin.



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Exhibition Contents

The exhibition comprises more than 120 original works of art. All artwork is professionally framed and includes hanging hardware and security plates for installation. Exhibition text in English, Traditional Chinese and Standard Chinese 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: Melissa Hung

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.



Grace Lin

Minimum space requirement: A gallery of approximately 1500 square ft (to be determined in consultation) is suggested.

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.

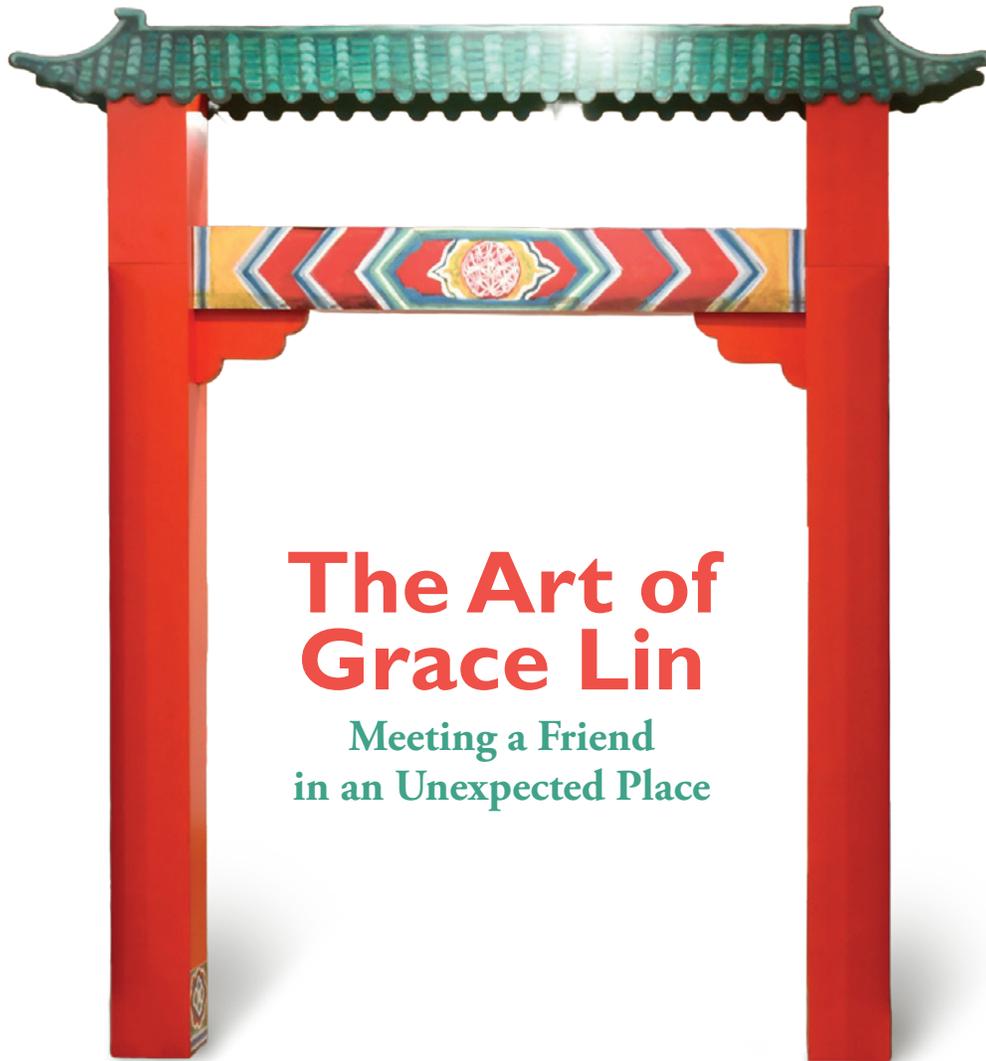
Media: The Carle will provide 10-12 high resolution images with cleared permissions to use for publicity and exhibition graphics.

Ephemera and other objects connected to the project are available.

Dates: The exhibition is on view at The Eric Carle Museum of Picture Book Art through December 2025 and is available to travel beginning April 2026.

Participation Fee: \$50,000 for three-month venue. Crating, shipping, insurance, curatorial travel and courier expenses are separate from the Participation Fee.

Contact: Jennifer Schantz, Executive Director jennifers@carlemuseum.org



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