

# J-1250 Nutmeg Princess best of 'Kid Lit' on shelves

Thomson News Service

For more than a dozen years now, this critic has had the honor of looking at what our publishers have been turning out for children. And, more often than not, it has been pretty remarkable and gloriously recommendable.

Without further ado, here are some of the most impressive books for children that have been released since late last fall, to give your toddler-to-pre-adolescent loved ones (and yourselves) a summer to remember.

Annick Press continues to turn out exquisitely illustrated, thoughtfully written Kid Lit. Indeed, their Spring List is so overwhelming, it is hard to choose just a few favorites — but it must be noted that nearly every single one is available in a remarkably low-priced \$5.95 paperback, as well as in \$14.95 or \$15.95 hard-covers.

Best of all is *The Nutmeg Princess*, by Grenada born Richard Keens-Douglas, with beautiful paintings by Annouchka Galouchko. In the Kipling tradition of *How Nutmeg Came About*, the charming story is made all the more magical by the illustrations, which somehow capture the haunting beauty of Caribbean culture and people.

*Steven's Baseball Mitt, A Book About Being Adopted*, by the gifted Kathy Stinson (with fine art by Robin Baird Lewis) is so sensitive (and reasonable, at \$4.95 paperback and \$14.95 hard-cover), it is hard to imagine a

more ideal book to give an adopted child. Simply perfect.

*Aa-Choo!*, by Wendy Orr, and illustrated by the always-satisfying Ruth Ohi, is so right in its depiction of the sick child who must be taken along to office with Work Mom. Naturally, the little girl charms the office and gets Mom sick enough to stay at home the next day.

*And You Can Be the Cat*, by the excellent Hazel Hutchins (again, with Ruth Ohi artwork), is also irresistible. A groups of kids play make-believe with one kid, "too little" Norman, stuck playing the cat.

Author—illustrator Jirina Marton has created a true classic with *Amelia's Celebration*. The art is utterly haunting and the story matches. A little girl sneaks off at night, watches her parents dance at a party and gets caught up in the romance of it all. Writing for children rarely gets better than this.

□ Allan Gould is the author of 16 books, father of two and a long-time lover and follower of children's literature.