



# Morris Micklewhite and the Tangerine Dress

*By Christine Baldacchino*

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**Morris Micklewhite and the Tangerine Dress** By Christine Baldacchino

Morris is a little boy who loves using his imagination. But most of all, Morris loves wearing the tangerine dress in his classroom's dress-up center. The children in Morris's class don't understand. Dresses, they say, are for girls. And Morris certainly isn't welcome in the spaceship some of his classmates are building. Astronauts, they say, don't wear dresses. One day when Morris feels all alone and sick from their taunts, his mother lets him stay home from school. Morris dreams of a fantastic space adventure with his cat, Moo. Inspired by his dream, Morris paints the incredible scene he saw and brings it with him to school. He builds his own spaceship, hangs his painting on the front of it and takes two of his classmates on an outer space adventure. With warm, dreamy illustrations, Isabelle Malenfant perfectly captures Morris's vulnerability and the vibrancy of his imagination.

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## **Morris Micklewhite and the Tangerine Dress** By Christine Baldacchino Bibliography

- Sales Rank: #53733 in Books
- Brand: Groundwood Books
- Published on: 2014-05-13
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 10.75" h x 8.25" w x .25" l, .80 pounds
- Binding: Hardcover
- 32 pages

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### **Editorial Review**

From School Library Journal

PreS-Gr 1—Throughout this heartening story, touches of tangerine point to the elements in Morris's world that are important to him: his mother's flaming tresses; his cat, Moo; and a dress from the school dress-up box. When he wears it, he feels wonderful. White is a well-chosen background foil for Malenfant's watercolors and charcoals; the soft acrylics comprising the vibrant dress "bleed"-a perfect effect for indicating movement. A marvelous spread shows Morris reveling in the color that swirls across the gutter as he thinks about his mother's hair, tigers, and the sun. The text details the fabric's swishes and crinkles and the click of the boy's heels. When the children tease and ostracize him, he pretends not to notice, but by Friday, he stays home with a stomachache. The role of adults is particularly well handled. There is no deus ex machina (teacher intervention), a situation that rings true for many such interactions. His mother does not pass judgment when she notices a boy wearing a dress in her son's painting, and she complies with his desire for nail polish. This support and Morris's irrepressible imagination buoy him as he returns to school, where his creative spaceship is a magnet for the boys; walls begin to crumble. Baldacchino offers an alternative model for families to the one depicted in Marcus Ewert's *10,000 Dresses* (Seven Stories, 2008), and rather than presenting an overt message about gender identity, the book provides a subtle and refreshing glimpse at a boy who simply likes to dress up.—Wendy Lukehart, District of Columbia Public Library

Review

**Stonewall Honor Book in Children's and Young Adult Literature**

**Selected for the American Library Association's Rainbow List**

**Finalist for the TD Canadian Children's Literature Award**

**Finalist for the Marilyn Baillie Picture Book Award**

**Finalist for the Blue Spruce Award**

**A *Kirkus Reviews* Best Book of the Year**

***Kirkus Reviews* selection for Best Picture Book Celebrating Diversity**

**A Cooperative Children's Book Center Choice**

**A *Huffington Post* Best Picture Book of the Year**

"Morris is a complex character whose creativity and personality shine. . . . Sensitive and reassuring." —  
*Kirkus Reviews*, starred review

"[R]ather than presenting an overt message about gender identity, the book provides a subtle and refreshing glimpse at a boy who simply likes to dress up." — *School Library Journal*

"Baldacchino doesn't sugar-coat the teasing and isolation Morris endures. . . . Malenfant showcases Morris's full emotional spectrum." — *Publishers Weekly*

"Unlike some more messagey titles on the subject, this one provides Morris with a personality beyond his dress-loving nature, making him enjoyable literary company." — *The Bulletin of the Center for Children's Books*

"Baldacchino's gentle story sensitively depicts gender nonconforming children, offering them reassurance and, one hopes, acceptance by introducing other children to the concept." — *Booklist*

“Morris likes lots of things about school. He likes to paint. He likes to do puzzles. He likes the apple juice at snack time and singing the loudest during circle time. Most of all, Morris likes the dress-up center. And the tangerine dress.” — from the book

#### About the Author

**Christine Baldacchino** is a graphic artist and web designer with a background in early childhood education. She lives in Toronto. **Isabelle Malenfant** has illustrated more than a dozen children’s books, mixing mediums such as watercolor, pastel, and charcoal to create poetic and sensitive worlds. She lives in Montreal.

#### Users Review

##### From reader reviews:

##### **Vicky Bowman:**

Spent a free time for you to be fun activity to perform! A lot of people spent their leisure time with their family, or their particular friends. Usually they undertaking activity like watching television, gonna beach, or picnic from the park. They actually doing same thing every week. Do you feel it? Would you like to something different to fill your own personal free time/ holiday? Could possibly be reading a book may be option to fill your no cost time/ holiday. The first thing you ask may be what kinds of reserve that you should read. If you want to consider look for book, may be the guide untitled Morris Micklewhite and the Tangerine Dress can be fine book to read. May be it might be best activity to you.

##### **Michael Trejo:**

People live in this new time of lifestyle always make an effort to and must have the spare time or they will get great deal of stress from both daily life and work. So , when we ask do people have time, we will say absolutely indeed. People is human not really a huge robot. Then we ask again, what kind of activity have you got when the spare time coming to you actually of course your answer will certainly unlimited right. Then do you try this one, reading books. It can be your alternative with spending your spare time, the book you have read is definitely Morris Micklewhite and the Tangerine Dress.

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