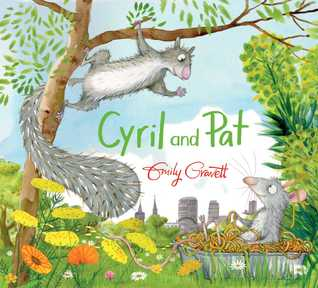
**Embargo** **Wednesday 20th November 2019 3:30pm**

**Cyril and Pat wins top spot for BookTrust’s first ever Storytime Book Prize**

***Emily Gravett wins*** ***BookTrust’s Storytime Prize with her story Cyril and Pat***

**Wednesday 20th November** – *Cyril and Pat* by Emily Gravett has today been announced as the winner of the ‘BookTrust Storytime Prize’, a brand-new award to celebrate the best books for sharing with babies and children aged 0-5 and run in partnership with the Youth Library Group.

The competition was extremely close and the standards high for the prize’s inaugural year. The shortlist, selected by judges Baroness Floella Benjamin, illustrator James Mayhew and librarians Amy McKay, Alison Brumwell, Jake Hope, Joy Court and Julia Hale was made up of:

* *Billy and the Beast* by Nadia Shireen
* *Cake* by Sue Hendra and Paul Linnet
* *Amazing* by Steve Antony
* *Little Owl, Little Owl, Can’t You Sleep*  by Jo Lodge
* *Hat Tricks* by Satoshi Kitamura
* *If All the World Were* by Joseph Coelho and Allison Colpoys
* *Cyril and Pat* by Emily Gravett

Over the 2019 summer holidays, the seven shortlisted books were shared with hundreds of children, carers and families by public librarians from nine English regions (organised in partnership with the Youth Library Group), along with Wales and Northern Ireland, to find the best book for sharing.

**Diana Gerald,** **BookTrust CEO said**:  *“BookTrust set up this prize to give credit to the wonderful authors and illustrators that create the books that give families so much pleasure, before children can read themselves or even talk. We are delighted Emily Gravett’s wonderful, funny and moving book Cyril and Pat is our very first BookTrust Storytime Prize winner. We know, and this year’s annual lecture by Paul Howard Jones confirms, that these early reading experiences inform children’s whole lives and pave the way to them becoming readers with all the benefits that brings - so thank you to all the publishers and creators that make reading so much fun!”*

**Emily Gravett, author and illustrator commented**: *“Wow! I’m SO excited that 'Cyril and Pat' has won the very first BookTrust Storytime Prize. I’m doing a little dance right now (but may have stopped by the time you read this- I’m not that fit!), but I promise I shall still be dancing on the inside.*

*When I imagine my books out in the world, I like to imagine them being shared, whether that’s as part of a cosy bedtime, or in a classroom or library group, so I’m extra proud that* Cyril and Pat *has won a prize whose very ethos is to find the best books for sharing. Hurrah!”*

***[Ends]***

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**Notes to Editors**

**BookTrust** is dedicated to getting children reading because we know that children who read are happier, healthier, more empathetic and more creative. Their early language development is supported and they also do better at school.

We are the UK’s largest children’s reading charity; each year we reach 3.9 million children across the UK with books, resources and support to help develop a love of reading, because we know that reading can transform lives.

We work with a variety of partners to get children excited about books, rhymes and stories, because if reading is fun, children will want to do it. Our books are delivered via health, library, schools and early years practitioners, and are supported with guidance, advice and resources to encourage the reading habit**.** [**booktrust.org.uk**](http://www.booktrust.org.uk)

**Additional quotes**

Suzanne Carnell’s (Two Hoots publisher) said, *"I am so thrilled that Emily Gravett has won the inaugural BookTrust Storytime Prize. Two Hoots is immensely proud to be Emily's publisher, and Cyril and Pat bears all the hallmarks of her genius: witty, unexpected, beautifully drawn and full of fun. What a brilliant new award this is: the importance and joy of sharing books should be celebrated, and it gives me particular pleasure that libraries are at the heart of this prize."*

Shortlist judge and librarian Joy Court said*: “*'Cyril and Pat*is an absolute gift to a storyteller,' said judge Joy Court. 'The characters just leap from the page with Emily's beautiful, vibrant images and it is such a good rhyming text with wonderful comic timing in the page-turn. But even more than that, it is a book with a great message about friendship and acceptance of others.”*

**Author/ Illustrator Biographies**

* **Steve Antony** is an award winning, bestselling children's book writer and illustrator based in Swindon in the UK. His 2014 debut, The Queen's Hat, won the Oscar's First Book Prize, was nominated for the Kate Greenaway Medal and shortlisted for a clutch of awards, including the Waterstones Children's Book Prize. Steve's other books include *Please Mr Panda, Unplugged* and *Betty Goes Bananas*.
* **Nadia Shireen** is a full time writer and illustrator who champions diversity and tolerance in all her books. Her debut book *Good Little Wolf* received a mention in the Bologna Ragazzi Opera Prima Award, and went on to win the UKLA Book Award. Nadia’s subsequent books have since been shortlisted for the Roald Dahl Funny Prize, The Sainsbury’s Book Award and the Waterstones Children's Book Prize.
* **Sue Hendra** Sue has illustrated over 100 books for children. When Sue met Paul Linnet they fell in love and started writing and illustrating together. Their creative brilliance soon led them to come up with a wealth of bestselling, award-winning picture books including *Barry the Fish with Fingers, Norman the Slug with the Silly Shell, Supertato* and the *Laugh Out Loud Book* Award *winning I Need a Wee*.
* **Paul Linnet** was born by the sea near to Brighton but he grew up in Derby where he studied Graphic Design and played guitar in a band called The Chihuahuas. Eventually Paul moved back to Brighton where he met Sue Hendra and they instantly fell in love. Their celebrated picture book partnership has created many bestselling, award-winning books including *Barry the Fish with Fingers, Norman the Slug with the Silly Shell, Supertato* and the *Laugh Out Loud Book* Award winning *I Need a Wee*.
* **Emily Gravett** first sprang into the limelight with the ground-breaking *Wolves* in 2005, which has been followed by such modern classics as *Meerkat Mail, Little Mouse's Big Book of Fears, Monkey* and *Me and Again*!, as well as *Tidy and Old Hat*, She is also the winner of two CILIP Kate Greenaway Medals.
* **Jo Lodge** is an illustrator and paper engineer and was greatly influenced by her artistic parents. Best known for her *Mr Croc* books but her distinctive bright colours and appealing animal characters have been used across a range of children's books including *Baby's First Playbook: Farm*, and *Pounce! Little Kitten*.
* **Joseph Coelho** Joseph is a poet and playwright. His debut children's collection "*Werewolf Club Rules*" was the winner of the 2015 CLPE CLiPPA Poetry Award. As well as poetry Joseph also writes picture books such as “*Luna Loves Library Day”* which was nominated for the 2018 Kate Greenaway Medal and “*If All The World Were*…” longlisted for the 2018 Kate Greenaway Medal. All of his work has poetry and an element of performance at its heart making his festival and school session dynamic occasions.
* **Allison Colpoys** is an award-winning book designer and illustrator, and a lover of pattern and typography. Allison’s first illustrated picture book, *The Underwater Fancy-dress Parade*, won two Australian Book Design Awards, an Australian Book Industry Award and the CBCA’s Crichton Award for the Best New Talent.
* **Satoshi Kitamura** is a Japanese children's picture book author and illustrator. In 1983 he received the Mother Goose Award for the Most Exciting Newcomer to British Illustration for Angry Arthur. He moved from Japan to London before returning to Tokyo in 2008. Satoshi’s collaboration with Colin McNaughton, Once Upon an Ordinary School Day, won The Japan Picture Book Award for best translated book. Satoshi’s book, Millie’s Marvellous Hat, was shortlisted for the Kate Greenaway Award in 2010.

**Judge Biographies**

* **Baroness Floella Benjamin, Obe Dl:** Actress, author, television presenter, singer, businesswoman and politician. She is known as presenter of children's programmes such as Play School, Play Away and Fast Forward.
* **Amy McKay:** School Librarian of the Year in 2016, makes regular appearances at Edinburgh and has judged the CILIP Carnegie and Kate Greenaway medals, the Blue Peter Book Awards and the Nibbies.
* **Alison Brumwell**: With nearly 20 years’ experience as a librarian Alison has held a variety of posts related to children’s and young people’s services, including Bookstart/Early Years Co-ordinator, and is 2019 Chair of the CILIP Carnegie and Kate Greenaway Medal judging panel.
* **Jake Hope**: Reading development/children's book consultant and has chaired numerous book awards including the prestigious CILIP Carnegie, Kate Greenaway Medals and more.
* **Joy Court:** Reviews Editor for The School Librarian journal and retired chair of the CILIP Carnegie and Kate Greenaway Medals.
* **James Mayhew:** Author of the best-selling Katie series, Ella Bella Ballerina, Gaspard the Fox and now Mrs Noah’s Pockets.
* **Julia Hale**: With 20 years of yexperience as a local librarian in Westminster, Dorset and Plymouth, Julia is the current Advisor for the Schools Library Service.