## **The Book Wings By Christopher Myers**

In this book, a boy named Ishmael is adopted by missionaries and taught about God. Ishmael learns about the Bible and becomes an important man in the Bible. But one day Ishmael learns that his own family is his real family. Ishmael starts to understand that his real family will always love him even when he is far away. This illustration is from the book The Book Wings by Christopher Myers, which is part of our 2018 Artist Selection. The Artworks are for sale in the Museum's rotating exhibition galleries and through our website. Please visit http://www.fitc.org/museum to see our current exhibition offerings. He lived a long, full life. I see him in museums, where he has a rightful place. I imagine him in parks, in front of buildings, on the street. I see him in heirloom photos and drawings, in city records, not just in the country. I remember him as a graceful people, folksy and square jawed, with a gaze that could scorch - his way of reminding us of the value of character in a person. He was a storyteller. He left a world of stories behind when he died. His spirit lingers and flickers. He's the inspiration for my handiwork. I'm going to be the first to admit that I'm very self-critical. I think this is, in part, why I am so interested in fairy tales. In fairy tales, everyone is beautiful, everything is beautiful. By the end of the story, everything has grown or changed in some way. Sometimes the book end is a mess. Sometimes the story is a mess. But in fairy tales, everyone is beautiful. Because fairy tales are true. We're reading Wings by Christopher Myers, a book about selfesteem. In the end, the boy who grew up with lumps on his arms transforms into something good. The boy who grew up with scars transforms into something good. It's really that simple. I was like that, like my grandfather. I learned to sing in second grade and my hands have been busy ever since. My first 5 years of school were spent drawing. I was unable to speak until I was 7.



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I remember a lot of things when I was a young boy, but what I remember most is the things I'm missing. I'm missing thousands of years of culture and knowledge, all of the things you take for granted and suddenly realize you can't do for yourself anymore because of everything that's gone. I'm missing reading and music, and books and toys and tchotchkes. I'm missing having four parents, one of them my best friend, and that doesn't even count the baby birds I fed with my bare hands or the dogs I raised from a puppy. People are going to say there's a difference between the airplane and the bird. As beautiful as the airplane looks, it can't fly, and it's only for human use. It can never soar. Birds, they can soar. And they soar because they are made to soar. They're made to do it. So they are not just beautiful; they're powerful. They're made to soar because of something in them. And when you fly a bird, you realize that you are in a place that belongs to them. And I'm the one who has been made to soar. And I'm flying. And I've been given wings. I'm free. When he is not illustrating his own childrens books, Myers has been working for the past few years writing plays, a childrens book, and a musical. In the past two years, his musical, titled "The Book of H.O.R.S.E. The Musical" has been the recipient of a NYC production award, a script competition, a musical theatre showcase, and two staged readings in NYC. His childrens book, Jake Makes a World: Jacob Lawrence, A Young Artist in Harlem, has also been a recipient of numerous awards, including a Notable Book citation from the African American Literature Association, and the NYS Arts Overall Excellence Award. 5ec8ef588b

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