

# MICHAEL CATCHPOOL



Michael Catchpool is the author of eight picture books, as well as numerous sketches and scripts used in schools. A primary school teacher and former curriculum advisor on English and Drama with a PhD in children's narrative writing, Michael is currently headteacher of a large primary school in Cambridge. He is married with two children and lives in St Neots.

## PUBLISHED PICTURE BOOKS

*The Cloud Spinner* illustrated by Alison Jay; titled *Cloth From the Clouds* in the UK (Gullane UK; Knopf US, 2012 – US edition still in print with PRH)

***An Amazon.com Best Book of the Year, 2012***

***An "Inspired Recommendations for Kids from Indie Booksellers" selection, 2012***

***Kirkus Starred Review, January 2012***

*Grandpa's Boat* illustrated by Sophy Williams (Andersen Press, 2008)

*That Yucky Love Thing* illustrated by Victoria Ball (Gullane, UK; Barnes & Noble, US – 2008)

*You Won't Shift a Hippo* illustrated by Rosalind Beardshaw (Gullane, 2007)

*Howling at the Moon* illustrated by Jill Newton (Gullane, 2006)

*Hopping Mad* illustrated by David Roberts (Little Tiger, 2004; Ready Steady Read, 2013)

*Where There's a Bear, There's Trouble* illustrated by Vanessa Cabban (Little Tiger, 2002; Ready Steady Read, 2013)

*Sleepy Sam* illustrated by Eleanor Taylor (Little Tiger Press, 2001)

## REVIEWS

'There are definitely lessons about taking only what you need, about care for the needs of others and about listening to what is unsaid, but they are fully inside the story and only add to the pleasure.' – **Kirkus Starred Review of *The Cloud Spinner***

'Who wouldn't want a scarf "soft as a mouse's touch and warm as roasted chestnuts"? That's just the type of special garment crafted by the titular cloud spinner, a boy who transforms clouds into elegant threads in Catchpool's ecological fable. ... Jay's now-signature paintings of exaggerated figures awash in a cracked varnish lend a timeless air of fantasy and whimsy to this original tale.' – **Publishers Weekly Review of *The Cloud Spinner***

'The touching words and the softly realistic pastel illustrations bring warmth, light and colour to a very positive treatment of bereavement.' – **Children's Bookseller on *Grandpa's Boat***

'This is a rare example of a counting book that is also a moral fable, and in which, as a result of their greed and possessiveness, the boys finally - and satisfyingly - end up with nothing. This is an impressive book for young children: a cautionary tale about how not to control the natural world, with detailed, earth-toned illustrations that simply burst with energy.'

**Booktrust Recommended Books on *Hopping Mad***

'The repetitive pattern creates a fabular feel suitable to such a politely conveyed moral tale!'

**Booktrust Recommended Books on *You Won't Shift a Hippo***

'Michael Catchpool's *Hopping Mad* covers a lot of ground in its colourful pages: friendship, selfishness, misunderstanding and the sort of row over possessions that leaves everyone worse off. Fred and Finn are neighbours arguing over the number of frogs in each other's ponds, building bigger and bigger defences every night to keep their amphibians in. The story provides good counting practice, and David Roberts' illustrations are pleasingly slimy, splashy and sticky.' – **Independent on Sunday**

'Colourful, attention-grabbing illustrations, together with succulent onomatopoeic words, make this a most desirable book for young children who love making sounds and words.'

**Carousel Magazine on *Where There's A Bear, There's Trouble***

'This is a very enjoyable read. The well-paced narrative is direct, with lots of dialogue and an obvious pattern. The use of alliteration and descriptive vocabulary gives it a lyrical quality.'

**Inis Magazine (Children's Books Ireland) on *Hopping Mad***