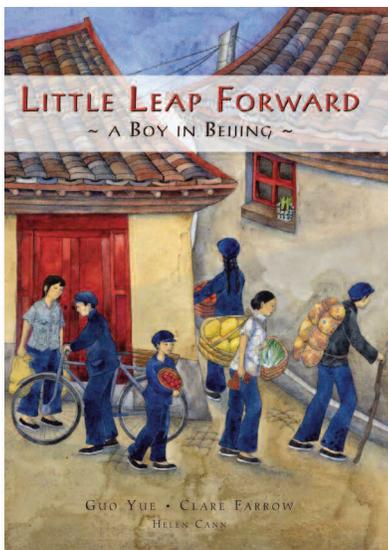


For immediate release April 2008, Cambridge, MA

BAREFOOT LOOKS TO CHINA WITH ITS FIRST ILLUSTRATED NOVEL

This July sees a new initiative from Barefoot Books, the award-winning independent children's publisher that has built its reputation on creating carefully crafted picture books. *Little Leap Forward: A Boy in Beijing* is the company's first full-length novel for older readers. It will be illustrated throughout, reflecting the company's commitment to the relationship between art and story; and like many of Barefoot's projects, it will introduce children to a different world and a different way of life. In this case, the setting is Beijing, China; the year is 1966 and the story is told by musician Guo Yue, and richly informed by his boyhood experiences — Yue was eight years old when the Red Guards moved to accelerate Mao Zedong's notorious 'Big Leap Forward'.

Why the move into young fiction – and why the illustrations? Co-Founder & President Nancy Traversy comments: *"When my daughter, Meaghan, was eight years old she was reading Shakespeare's Storybook, Barefoot's fully illustrated collection of Shakespeare's classic stories filled with adventure, love, destiny and magic. She was told by her teacher that she was too old for picture books and should be reading chapter books instead. Meaghan is very much a visual learner so was upset about the social stigma attached to reading books with pictures. Art and illustration are central to Barefoot's offer and we knew we needed to find a way to keep them center stage but present them in a way that was more socially acceptable for older children."*



LAUNCH TITLE

Little Leap Forward: A Boy in Beijing

Written by: Guo Yue and Clare Farrow

Illustrated by: Helen Cann

Hardcover with jacket, 5" x 7 7/8" • 128 pgs. • \$16.99

TO BE RELEASED JULY 2008


Barefoot Books
Celebrating Art and Story
www.barefootbooks.com

Tessa Strickland, Co-Founder and Editor-in-Chief, says: *"Although we live in an image-dominated culture, art is more often than not relegated to second place in school curricula and in chapter books once children attain reading fluency. This sends a powerful message to children that art is somehow less important than the spoken and written word. Yet children come into the world with many languages at their disposal; music, art and movement, for example, as well as language. It feels important to us honor art as well as language throughout a child's education. It also feels important to publish fiction which is not just about escape but which broadens older children's horizons, preparing them to engage with other cultures in an informed and open-minded way. We couldn't have wished for a better first project to convey the cultural and political importance of the arts in children's lives."*

For review copies or press inquiries, please contact:

Jeanne Nicholson Group Branding & Publicity Manager
617-995-4640

jeanne.nicholson@barefootbooks.com