

Barefoot Books celebrates 30th anniversary

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Founders Nancy Traversy and Tessa Strickland

Independent children's book publisher Barefoot Books will celebrate its 30th anniversary this September.

The award-winning UK company has published more than 1,000 titles and distributed more than 30 million books into the hands of children across the globe.

Barefoot said: "Building on its earliest, distinct commitment to creating visually captivating books that celebrate global awareness and diversity, compassion and inclusion, Barefoot Books today remains a rarity in the industry: a fiercely independent publisher offering a deep and diverse collection, published in multiple languages and distributed globally."

Mothers Nancy Traversy and Tessa Strickland started Barefoot Books out of their homes because they couldn't find the books they wanted for their kids, launching their first book list in September 1993.

"Until recently, the company's emphasis on multicultural, diverse books put them on the fringes of mainstream publishing, prompting them to adopt an innovative business model that focused on independent booksellers, speciality retailers, key educational and literacy partners, and local community outreach," the indie said.

"As the company grew, its UK publishing team moved from Bath to Oxford, opening one of their flagship 'Barefoot Studios' in Summertown. The colourful retail space quickly became an award-winning and beloved gathering

place for families to enjoy global festivals, storytelling and craft events, birthday parties and more.”



Nancy Traversy

In 2012 and 2020, Barefoot was awarded the Independent Publishers Guild’s Alison Morrison Diversity Award. It worked with BookTrust to create the bestselling board book *Baby Talk* and bring copies to every baby in England and Wales. And in 2020 the company partnered with BookTrust again to distribute 600,000 copies of *Baby Play*. Beyond the UK, Forbes named Barefoot as one of the 25 Best Small Companies in America in 2017 and they were also listed among Publishers Weekly’s Fast-Growing Independent Publishers of 2022 and 2023.

Barefoot Books creates picture books, activity decks, board books, animated sing-alongs and educational content for children aged from 0 to 12.

Its autumn 2023 catalogue consists of more than 20 new titles including the graphic-novel-adjacent picture book, *Stranded!*, as well as five new additions to their critically acclaimed Our World series that follows days in the lives of children around the world. This series will also be included in the collection of dual-language editions Barefoot plans to release in spring 2024, with each book translated into the language native to the country it features.

Traversy, Barefoot Books c.e.o. and co-founder, said: “Throughout our 30 year journey, I’m proud to say we have never wavered from our commitment to publish diverse and inclusive books that promote sustainability, social-emotional learning, mindfulness and global awareness. The UK is ready now more than ever for these types of children’s books, and I’m thrilled we are able to celebrate our 30th anniversary here.”