Eleanor A. Dasi, "Entry on: Galimoto by Catherine Stock, Karen Lynn Williams", peer-reviewed by Divine Che Neba, Daniel A. Nkemleke and Elżbieta Olechowska. Our Mythical Childhood Survey (Warsaw: University of Warsaw, 2022). Link: http://omc.obta.al.uw.edu.pl/myth-survey/item/1459. Entry version as of November 21, 2026.

Catherine Stock , Karen Lynn Williams

Galimoto

United States (1990)

TAGS: African Storytelling African Traditions



We are still trying to obtain permission for posting the original cover.

General information	
Title of the work	Galimoto
Country of the First Edition	United States of America
Country/countries of popularity	USA, Malawi
Original Language	English
First Edition Date	1990
First Edition Details	Karen Lynn Williams, *Galimoto*. Ill. by Catherine Stock, New York: Lothrop, Lee & Shepard Books, 1990, 32 pp.
ISBN	0688087892
Genre	Fiction
Target Audience	Children (4–8 years)
Author of the Entry	Eleanor A. Dasi, University of Yaoundé I, wandasi5@yahoo.com
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Creators



Catherine Stock , b. 1952
(Illustrator)

Born in Sweden in 1952 to a diplomat, Catherine Stock has had the opportunity to travel and live in different places, including Paris, New York, New Orleans and South Africa, in the latter she attended art school at the University of Cape Town. After graduation, she taught art and history at a teachers' training college in South Africa and later moved to London to obtain her teaching certificate. She then joined her parents in New York and pursued a postgraduate degree in art. She went back to South Africa but the rising racial tensions caused by apartheid sent her back to New York, where she spends part of her time. In addition to illustrating books for children, among which are *Vinnie and Abraham, Emily and Carlos* and *After the Kill*, she has also authored a few, including *A Spree in Paree and Porc in New York*. She has received several awards and honours amongst which are the Ten Best Children's Books of the Year selection for *A Spree in Paree* from Time Magazine in 2004.

Sources:

Charlesbridge.com (accessed: June 21, 2022);

Encyclopedia.com (accessed: June 21, 2022).

Bio prepared by Eleanor A. Dasi, University of Yaoundé I, wandasi5@yahoo.com

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Karen Lynn Williams , b. 1952
(Author)

Karen Lynn Williams is an American writer focusing more on children literature. Much of her work deals with the difficulties experienced by children in developing countries. Born in 1952, in New Haven, CT, she attended the University of Connecticut, where she obtained a Bachelor's degree in science (BS 1974) and the Southern Connecticut State University where she graduated with an MA in Deaf Education. She worked as a teacher of the deaf in Connecticut in 1977-80, and later, as a Peace Corps English teacher in Malawi, in 1980-83. From 1990-93 she lived and worked in Deschapelles, Haiti, where her husband Steve was a doctor at the Hôpital Albert Schweitzer.

As a kid, her dream was to become the youngest novelist ever. At the age of ten, she formed a writing group with her friends and spent with them hours writing. Her award-winning books include *Baseball and Butterflies* (1990), *Painted Dream* (1998), *Galimoto* (1990); her other books include *Circles of Hope* (2005), *Tap Tap* (1994), *One Thing I'm Good at* (1999). Presently, she teaches literature and writing in the Chatham University Master of Fine Arts Program in Children's and Adolescent Writing.

Sources:

Karenlynnwilliams.com (accessed: June 21, 2022);

Harpercollins.com (accessed: June 21, 2022).

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Additional information

Summary

Kondi, a seven year old boy, embarks on making a *galimoto** with the wires he finds in his old shoe box. His brother, Ufulu, doubts his abilities and thinks that the boy is too young and also does not have enough wire. Ufulu does not discourage Kondi. His friend, Gift, and his uncle, lend him some wires but he still does not have enough. He goes to a grinding mill to obtain more wires but he is harassed by the women waiting in line who think that he wants to grind before his turn. He is left alone when the women realise that he is only in search of wires. The wires he gets at the mill are still not enough for his galimoto. On the way home, he collects another wire from Munde, his friend Gift's younger sister who is playing on an anthill. Given that the wires he has gathered so far are still not enough, Kondi goes for more to a trash heap behind a bicycle shop. There, people mistake him for a thief but finally, let him take the wires he wants. In spite of all these setbacks and challenges, Kondi manages to make his galimoto. His friends, in amazement, cheer him up and play with him. The fact that he succeeded gives him courage and determination to make many more galimotos of more complex forms - an ambulance, an aeroplane or an helicopter.

* A toy car made by children in Malawi using old wires, sticks and cornstalks.

Analysis

The story mirrors everyday life in a typical African village, where advancements in technology are few, where children do not have access to toys but do not lack imagination and ingenuity to build their own, unique toys from scrap material. This shows how creative children can be, and how "useless" scrap can fire imagination and be recycled to replace expensive and unobtainable toys. This act of creativity lies at the base of innovation and Kondi's ability to craft toys of various automobile and aircraft shapes is indicative of his potential for technological invention, an activity that goes beyond the school chalkboard. Kondi's toys are not simply play things but they also widen the spectrum of African crafts, help develop children's creative imaginations and open them up to outside elements and other cultures.

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	Kondi's perseverance, determination, creative imagination, and self-confidence are values that every African child should emulate. Despite the obstacles he faces at every step of his endeavour, he still pushes on and fulfills his dream to make a galimoto for himself.
Classical, Mythological, Traditional Motifs, Characters, and Concepts	African Storytelling African Traditions
Other Motifs, Figures, and Concepts Relevant for Children and Youth Culture	Boys Child, children Success and failure
Further Reading	Unesco Publication, *Children's Toys from Africa*, available at arvindguptatoys.com (accessed: June 21, 2022).

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