



CALL ME TREE / LLÁMAME ÁRBOL

by Maya Christina Gonzalez, illustrated by Maya Christina Gonzalez

Age Range: 3 - 8

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The author of *I Know the River Loves Me / Yo sé que el río me ama* (2009) offers a bilingual picture book that presents the triumphant journey from seed to tree, conveying a deep appreciation for nature.

A seed, depicted as a little boy, nestles deep underground. He wakes up and grows into a strong tree, free yet rooted. When he awakens, he sees other trees, presented on the page as an array of ethnically diverse children, standing and moving in their own ways. The text is brief, lyrical, and equally expressive in both the English and Spanish. “Some sing songs / Some sing along / All trees have roots / All trees belong // Unos cantan canciones / Otros se unen al coro / Todos los árboles tienen raíces / Todos los árboles tienen un lugar.” Reading the text aloud invites the incorporation of creative movement, such as yoga or dance, and is sure to engage younger and older children alike. Visionary illustrations stretch vibrant colors across the pages, with details that encourage readers to sit with the book and explore. Most notably, the author/illustrator excels at using few words to evoke grand imagery, relaying a powerful message to children: We are all our own trees—equal, vital and free.

An exquisitely crafted call to honor ourselves, one another and the natural world. (*Picture book. 3-8*)