

## Maya Christina Gonzalez, Author / Illustrator

*Call Me Tree/ Lláname Árbol*  
*I Know the River Loves Me / Yo sé que el río me ama*  
*My Colors, My World/ Mis colores, mi mundo*



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Maya Christina Gonzalez is a fine artist, educator, and the illustrator of more than twenty picture books, several of which she also wrote. Her award-winning titles include *Laughing Tomatoes and Other Spring Poems*, *Nana's Big Surprise*, and *Prietita and the Ghost Woman*. Her book *My Colors, My World* won the prestigious Pura Belpré Award Honor from the American Library Association.

Her most recent picture book, *Call Me Tree/Lláname Árbol*, will be released in November 2014 from the Children's Book Press imprint of LEE & LOW BOOKS. This imaginative book about self-discovery takes readers on a journey from tiny seed to full tree, inviting them to connect deeply with the natural world. In a **starred review**, *Kirkus Reviews* says *Call Me Tree* is "an exquisitely crafted call to honor ourselves, one another and the natural world."

Maya's inspiration for *Call Me Tree* dates back to when she was thirteen and her family first moved from the desert to the Oregon Woods. Maya says, "I came to think of myself as a tree. The strength and uniqueness of trees inspires me." This is the third book that Maya has both written and illustrated, and is a companion to her other nature-themed works, *My Colors, My World/ Mis colores, mi mundo* and *I Know the River Loves Me/Yo sé que el río me ama*.

When not in the studio, Maya works with children and educators to stress the importance of creativity as personal empowerment in the classroom. She has developed several lines of curriculum and training which can be found on her website, [mayagonzalez.com](http://mayagonzalez.com). In 2009, Maya co-founded Reflection Press, an independent press that publishes radical and revolutionary children's books, and she later co-created an online learning environment called School of the Free Mind that offers e-courses on creating children's books and fostering creativity.

Maya Christina Gonzalez lives in San Francisco, California with her husband, two children, and two rescue guinea pigs.



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