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ACTION-PACKED ADVENTURES OF RENOWNED ARTIST

SPARK NEW BIOGRAPHY BY AWARD-WINNING CHILDREN'S AUTHOR

In his quest to paint the Indian tribes of North and South America, the artist and adventurer George Catlin braved burning deserts, uncharted prairies, and high mountain passes from icy Alaska to the Amazon jungle. His "Indian Gallery" of art and artifacts created a sensation from New York to Paris, yet this real-life Indiana Jones of the 19th-century art world died penniless and nearly forgotten. In ***Painting the Wild Frontier: The Art and Adventures of George Catlin*** (Clarion, July), award-winning children's book author Susanna Reich presents a lavishly-illustrated and action-packed adventure story of a great American artist--one whose "Indian Gallery" is now considered a crown jewel of the Smithsonian Institution.

With his taste for adventure, his optimism and self-reliance, and his entrepreneurial spirit, George Catlin embodied many of the qualities that defined the young American nation. A talented, driven man with a love of the wilderness and a gift for making friends, he crossed paths with many of the leading figures of his day, from Daniel Webster to P.T. Barnum. His story gives young readers a fresh, exciting take on American history and prompts thought-provoking questions about race relations, the treatment of Native Americans, and the settlement of the West.

Catlin's iconic paintings of the 1830's were the first images of Plains Indians that most whites had ever seen, and his books, lectures, and exhibits helped shape the world's understanding of Native Americans. Long before Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show, he produced live performances by Indian troupes that were the talk of the town. But after a series of tragic setbacks, Catlin went bankrupt and lost both his family and his life's work. Unbowed, he embarked on a second round of adventures with paintbrush in hand,

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traveling the length and breadth of South America and northward to the Bering Straits. At the end of his life he returned to the United States and lived out his last days painting in a tower of the Smithsonian "Castle" in Washington, D.C.

Susanna Reich's meticulously-researched biography draws on primary source documents, Catlin's own writings, and the latest scholarly work to craft a riveting tale for young readers ages 10-14. Kids can learn about Catlin's adventures hunting buffalo, dining on panther steak, fending off wild boar, and entertaining the kings and queens of Europe. Extensively illustrated with Catlin's own paintings, the book's wealth of visual material also includes archival prints and photographs and a full-color insert. *Painting the Wild Frontier* features a foreword by John Haworth (Cherokee), Director of the National Museum of the American Indian's Gustav Heye Center, as well as source notes, a bibliography, maps, a timeline, and an index.

Susanna Reich, www.susannareich.com, is the author of *José! Born to Dance*, winner of the Tomás Rivera Mexican American Children's Book Award and an International Latino Book Award; *Clara Schumann: Piano Virtuoso*, an Orbis Pictus Honor Book, ALA Notable, ALA Best Book for Young Adults, and *School Library Journal* Best Book of the Year; and *Penelope Bailey Takes the Stage*, a Scripps Howard Best Book of 2006. She serves on the Steering Committee of Metro New York SCBWI and on the PEN America Children's Committee. Reich lives in Ossining, New York, with her husband, author Gary Golio, and is available for interviews.

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Painting the Wild Frontier: The Art and Adventures of George Catlin

Written by Susanna Reich

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