

We are so grateful to YALSA and to the YALSA NF award committee for having selected Eyes of the World: Robert Capa, Gerda Taro and the Invention of Modern Photojournalism as a Finalist for the Excellence in Nonfiction Award. This is the second book we have written together, after Sugar Changed the World, and the second to be a finalist – which is most gratifying. But there was something special about being included in this year’s honorees. Once the books were announced, we rushed to read all four. We were struck not only by the excellence of the books, but by the freshness of the approaches – which collectively signal the vitality of YA nonfiction. Deb’s book gave an entirely new kind of personal voice to a dual biography – shattering the idea that nonfiction had to be some kind of distant, cool, documentary. Dashka gave us a perfect book for our time, balancing voices and lives as we usually only see in YA fiction. Lisa and Mary Beth’s book shines with fresh voices and images. And Martin’s beautifully designed book captures so many stories within one subject. Notice the trend, which is echoed in ours, books that take risks that experiment with voice, and that understand how for teenagers a great many voices are coming at them at the same time. The day of the old dutiful plod that is – oh that hated phrase -- “good for reports” (which, of course means, not fun to read) is over. We are all seeing nonfiction as a place of innovation and invention. Not by attempting to echo websites with little dots of Fun Facts but by bringing many stories, new stories, unheard stories, together. Perhaps it really is time to retire the term “nonfiction” – meaning not interesting – and call our work Real Books, Reality Books – as complex, as weird, as unexpected, as choral, as, well, the lives of YA readers.

People sometimes ask why we would write about a couple in the mid-1930s who took black and white photos. We did because their story is our story – ours, meaning Marina and me, as we are a couple who work together, but also meaning our time. Themselves refugees from demagogic, populist, anti-immigrant, anti-Semites, Capa and Taro risked, indeed gave, their lives to tell the story of the fight against fascism, and of the refugees ripped from their homes desperately seeking shelter. What could be more of our time than to honor them for their risk and their artistry, and to attempt to inspire our

readers to use their devices to see – the world around them – to record, to capture, the faces and stories of now; and to share what they find with the world?

We were especially fortunate that the International Center of Photography and the Magnum Photo agency agreed to partner with us. That gave us unlimited access to photos by Capa, Taro and their friend Chim. And, equally important, access to ICP's files of interviews, letters, artifacts related to Capa and Taro, and to the expertise of their chief curator, Cynthia Young. And that brings us to images. For Marina, the book was a year-long dive into photographs she treasures. Marina: I would build chapters around photos – exploring through one image after another each day, each beat in Capa's and Taro's journeys. I hope Marc won't mind, but I fell in love with Capa – how could you not--handsome, charming, and so effortlessly talented. But he was matched by Taro, a model of an independent woman, always chic, yet able to match any man in courage, determination, and talent. Theirs was a love story, but in a way our book is too – our love for them, for their work, for the bravery of that brief moment when two refugees with their cameras tried to stop Hitler before it was too late. And yet it was too late – World War II came with its unimaginable slaughter. And that is our final point: researching this book just as demagogic, populist, anti-immigrant, anti-Semitic movements rise in America and around the world was a haunting experience. The world paid a horrific price for Hitler's rise – that is the clearest warning about the present. When hatred is the path to power, we must all fight for our own values – with cameras, with words, with our voices, and our votes.

Thank you