



## Madeleine Editions

*Monster Dance* Press Release

### A JOYFUL CHILDREN'S TALE AMID THE PANDEMIC, ILLUSTRATED BY MUPPETS CARTOONIST

Guy Gilchrist, Jim Henson's cartoonist behind *The Muppets* and other famed series such as *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles* and *The Pink Panther*, has illustrated a book – available as a digital app and as a hard copy book – for children ages 3~6. Published by award-winning international publishing house, Madeleine Editions, and written by the company's founder, Eva Lou with read-aloud narration by actor Denis O'Hare (*True Blood*, *The Good Wife*, *Late Night*), the book, titled *Monster Dance*, aims to encourage and comfort children coping with lifestyle changes during the pandemic. The book was a doctor's initiative by Dr. Karen Tsai, a Los Angeles based physician and co-founder of [DonatePPE.org](http://DonatePPE.org), a non-profit organization that procures personal protective equipment for medical professionals working on the frontlines.

Noticing that children's mental health was getting lost in the scramble to combat COVID-19, Dr. Tsai said, "It was very clear that COVID-19 would end with a vaccine or a cure, neither of which was immediate in sight. During this challenging time, I saw children struggle emotionally to cope with the reality of COVID. It was something we needed to address since children are our future."

Dr. Tsai enlisted Gilchrist, whose illustrations are among the most prominent and widely recognized American cartoon icons of the 20th century. Guy knew he wanted to help by doing what he does best: making people smile. He also wanted to create a timeless book: one that would resonate with children today and for years to come. So the duo teamed up with Madeleine Editions' Eva Lou.

"When I got the call from Guy and Karen, I was in lockdown week number five with my family in France," said Lou, "The sense of helplessness was real. Madeleine Editions had just donated 12,000 books to families in confinement but we wanted to do more. Here was an opportunity to confront 'the monster' head on, with concrete, timely results: an inspiring book in the laps of children, masks on the faces of healthcare heroes."

*Monster Dance* follows an endearingly melodramatic dog, Maurice, and Charlie, an artistic little girl, in a world that's suddenly gone topsy-turvy. While Maurice voices his greatest fears, Charlie teaches him practical ways to help fight the virus (the "Monster"), illuminating that patience and caution are not fear, but courage. Not only does *Monster Dance* explain to little ones the sudden changes around them in a context they can understand, it also empowers them by putting them in a position to "lead the dance." In the end we're left with the lasting and hopeful message that living with a virus - or any sickness - isn't just "waiting it out." Together Maurice and Charlie can make every day count and do what they do best – grow with joy.

The multimedia story, out fall, 2020 as a pictures books app for kids on Apple App Store, Google Play store, and Apple Books store, merges read-aloud narration, lightly animated illustration and music – a format signature to Madeleine Editions books. It is scored with "La Valse," by the great impressionist composer, Maurice Ravel. The hardcover edition book includes the same high-quality music and narration via QR code.

Thanks to the *Monster Dance* Kickstarter success and overwhelming interest in the print book, the hardcover edition can now be preordered on the Madeleine Editions website. For every book sold, Madeleine Editions will donate 3 PPE masks to be purchased and distributed by [DonatePPE.org](http://DonatePPE.org) to arm healthcare workers around the world. Ordering the book in advance will help get PPEs to healthcare heroes without delay. Additionally, *Monster Dance* will be donated to children's hospitals across the United States. The uplifting tale provides beauty, encouragement and a bit of levity to families around the globe during a challenging and uneasy time.