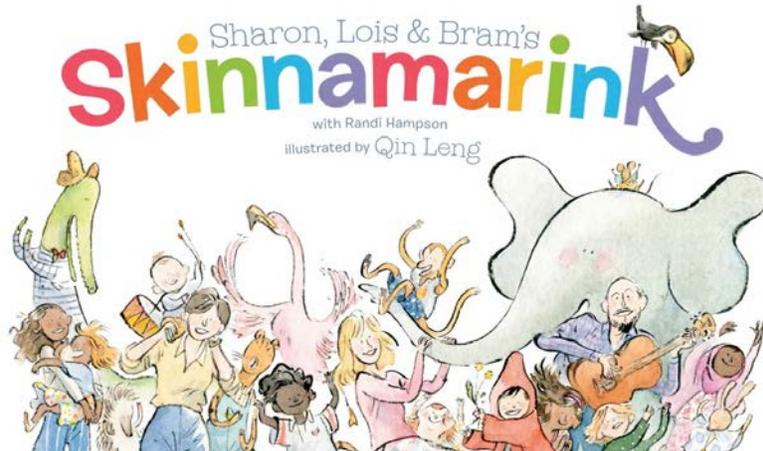


IODE Ontario Jean Throop Book Award

The **2020 IODE Ontario Jean Throop Book Award** is awarded to “**Skinnamarink**”, written by Sharon Hampson, Lois Lilienstein, Bram Morrison, with Randi Hampson and illustrated by Qin Leng. This is their first picture book, using the words from the song by the same name.



Through **Qin Leng's** wonderfully imaginative illustrations, this delightful picture book tells the story of a community coming together. Young and old, from little mice to a big elephant, people and animals gather into a spontaneous parade as they follow the sound of music.



During the course of her career, Qin Leng has illustrated picture books, magazines and book covers with publishers around the world. Recent picture books include her author/illustrator debut *I Am Small, Ordinary, Extraordinary Jane Austen* by Deborah Hopkinson and *Family Is a Family* written by Sara O'Leary. *Hana Hashimoto, Sixth Violin*, written by Chieri Uegaki, was a finalist for the Governor General's Literary Award and received the Asian/Pacific American Award for Literature. Qin lives in Toronto, with her husband and son.

Sharon Hampson began her career as a folksinger in Toronto as a teenager, singing in coffeehouses and hootenannies across Canada and the United States. Married to Joe Hampson, member of Canada's "The Travellers", they have two children Randi and Geoff. She was instrumental in founding Canada's innovative folk-artist program, Mariposa In The Schools.

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Lois Lilienstein was a classically trained singer and pianist; she studied music at the University of Michigan, where she met her future husband, Ernest Lilienstein. He was a Sociology professor at York University in Toronto, where the family settled and raised their son David. Lois, along with Sharon, created the Children's Area at the Mariposa Folk Festival. It was through this program and Sharon, that she met Bram. Lois retired from touring as part of the trio of Sharon, Lois & Bram in Spring 2000, appearing only for special occasions and benefit shows. Lois died of cancer on April 23, 2015. She was 78.

By the early 60's **Bram Morrison** was playing in coffeehouses and hearing Canadian singers, traditional and contemporary. He began working and touring with folksinger Alan Mills. Inspired by Mills' concerts for children, Morrison became a music teacher until 1975 when he began working with Mariposa In The Schools and Prologue to the Performing Arts. In 1978, through the M.I.T.S. program, Bram met Sharon & Lois. The rest they say... is history. Bram, along with Sharon celebrated the trio's 40th Anniversary in 2018. Bram has stepped aside from touring as of December 2019. He is married to Ruth Morrison. They have three children.



In 2012, (L – R) Bram, Lois and Sharon received the Canadian version of the Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Medal

Randi Hampson, Barrister & Solicitor, practises Family Law and is the daughter of Sharon Hampson. Through Bram's encouragement and following his retirement, Sharon and Randi continuing to share the music of Sharon, Lois and Bram with fans and friends, old and new.



They have been singing together since Randi was three. When Lois was unable to make a holiday concert performance, she suggested Randi take her place. Randi accepted the opportunity and performed on stage, alongside her mother. Randi co-authored Skinnamarink. She is the Producer of Sharon and Bram's recently released, Juno-Nominated recording, *Sharon & Bram and Friends*. Sharon and Randi are excited to be singing the songs of Sharon, Lois & Bram (many of which were introduced to the trio by Randi), with a new generation of musical friends.

What does Skinnamarink mean? You may not find its definition in a dictionary, but the meaning is clear to the generations of children who sang along: friendship, happiness, sharing, community and ultimately, love. This song has been sung in weddings and in classrooms. It can be fun and silly - especially with the accompanying actions! And it has a way of bringing people together.