

# Going Back Home: An Artist Returns to the South

written by Toyomi Igus  
illustrated by Michele Wood

## About the Book

**Genre:** Juvenile Nonfiction/  
Autobiography

**Format:** Paperback, \$9.95  
35 pages

**ISBN:** 9780892391974

**Reading Level:** Grade 5

**Interest Level:** Grades 3–8

**Guided Reading Level:** W

**Accelerated Reader® Level/Points:**  
5.2/0.5

**Lexile™ Measure:** AD900L

\*Reading level based on the ATOS Readability Formula

**Themes:** United States History, Slavery, Identity/Self Esteem/Confidence, Overcoming Obstacles, Home, History, Heroism, Grandparents, Forgiveness, Farming, Families, Education, Dreams & Aspirations, Discrimination, Conflict resolution, Childhood Experiences and Memories, African/African American Interest, Biography/Memoir, Art, Poverty, Empathy/Compassion

**Resources on the web:**

[leeandlow.com/books/going-back-home](http://leeandlow.com/books/going-back-home)

## SYNOPSIS

More than half a century after her family moved North to find a better life, African American artist Michele Wood returned to the South to see and feel the land where her ancestors lived. In her first book for children, *Going Back Home*, Wood presents her paintings inspired by this personal journey. Michele Wood collaborated with author Toyomi Igus to interpret her visual images and family stories. Igus' moving text draws on African American history to reveal the experiences of Wood's turn-of-the-century sharecropping family.

Through her complex and richly patterned art, Michele Wood places herself back in history, in the time of her ancestors, imagining their struggles to overcome hardship through family love and strong community. *Going Back Home* marks Michele Wood's memorable return to her home and heritage.

All guided reading level placements may vary and are subject to revision. Teachers may adjust the assigned levels in accordance with their own evaluations.

## BACKGROUND

### About Michele Wood and *Going Back Home*

Artist, educator, illustrator, speaker, designer, writer and mentor, Michele Wood uses art to depict moments in African American history as well as changing consciousness of the African American experience. As an artist Woods documents the African American experience with a uniquely poetic introspection on African American history.

Through *Going Back Home: An Artist Returns to the South*, Wood explores her family's rural Southern heritage in this unusually lyrical meditation on African American history. She draws inspiration from her African heritage, Southern African American roots, American quilts, African textiles and everyday experiences. Using her chosen medium acrylic, Wood is known for her detailed quilted pattern motif works. Quilting takes an important role in Woods work because enslaved African American women were essential to the development of the craft even though they did not invent it. As enslaved women were needed for spinning, weaving, sewing and quilting on plantations and in their master's households they became highly skilled quilters. Often runaway slaves and members of the Underground Railroad would use quilts for communicating, marking safe spaces for hiding as well as escape routes. For more information about the Underground Railroad's quilt codes, consult the Smithsonian Museum's resource page (<https://folklife.si.edu/magazine/underground-railroad-quilt-codes>).

Linked to their African heritage, African Americans used bold colors and large-scale designs in their quilting to reflect their experiences of enslavement, trauma, family, and other meaningful moments. "Story" quilts used an applique technique to symbolically tell a tale. It's a style that's been handed down through generations and is still popular. The diamond shape was symbolic of the cycles of life and a break in this pattern was thought to keep away evil spirits. Wood draws on this knowledge to show that African American quilting is woven into America's history.

In richly patterned paintings evocative of African fabrics, Wood depicts the emotional undercurrents of slavery, sharecropping, and the movement north; she also shows the happier rituals of church-going and wedding celebrations. Throughout, her sensuous style gives hard realities such as picking cotton and pumping water. Portraits of the African American cowboy Nat Love and a porch-sitting guitar player make important points about African American contributions to American history and culture. Wood's ruminations, expressed in Igus's serviceable prose, broaden the impact of the paintings, whether she is describing her grandmother's courage in eating for the first time at a formerly segregated restaurant or explaining the life-affirming symbolism that informs the memorable self-portrait that closes the book.

### Teaching About Slavery

Consult Teaching Tolerance's "Tongue-Tied" guide (<https://historyexplorer.si.edu/sites/default/files/PrimarySources.pdf>) and "Teaching Hard History: A Framework for Teaching American Slavery" (<https://www.tolerance.org/sites/default/files/2018-02/TT-Teaching-Hard-History-FrameworkWEB-February2018.pdf>) for terminology, key concepts, objectives, and appropriate timelines for teaching about slavery correctly, honestly, and accurately.

## BEFORE READING

### Prereading Focus Questions

(Reading Standards, Craft & Structure, Strand 5 and Integration of Knowledge & Ideas, Strand 7)

(Speaking & Listening Standards, Comprehension & Collaboration, Strands 1 and 2)

Before introducing this book to students, you may wish to develop background knowledge and promote anticipation by posing questions such as the following:

- What is the role of visual art in storytelling?
- Why is family history important to know and pass on?
- What do you know about memoirs or personal narratives? Why are memoirs of interest to readers? What memoirs or personal narratives have you read?
- Where are the places different members of your family have lived before you were born? Have you been there? What was it like or what do you think it would be like?
- Why do you think I chose this book for us to read today?

You may want to have students journal their responses to these questions or pose the final question as a KWL discussion and chart so that you can refer back to it throughout and after the reading of the book to further their thinking on the topic(s).

### Exploring the Book

(Reading Standards, Key Ideas & Details, Strand 1; Craft & Structure, Strand 5; and Integration of Knowledge & Ideas, Strand 7)

(Speaking & Listening Standards, Comprehension & Collaboration, Strands 1 and 2)

- **Book Walk:** Discuss the cover, the title, and the illustrations. Look at the structure of the book—how it is set up in two-page spreads made up of paintings and narrative. Ask students what story they think the book tells, and how each part of a spread might tell that story differently. List these predictions and ask students to check them after the reading is complete.
- **Book Title Exploration:** Talk about the title of the book. What do the words “going back” “return” “artist” and “home” mean? Ask students what they think this book will most likely be about. What do they think might happen? What information do they think they might learn? What makes them think that? Discuss the cover illustration and have students talk about how the picture might relate to the title of the book.
- **Author/Illustrator:** Introduce students to Michelle Wood and Toyomi Igus. You can find information in the “about the author” and “about the illustrator” section of this guide.
- **Encourage students to stop and jot in their notebooks when they:** Learn new information, have an emotional reaction or an idea, have a question, or see new words.

### Setting a Purpose for Reading

(Reading Standards, Key Ideas & Details, Strands 1–3)

Have students read to find out:

- How does the title fit the theme of the story? How does family history inspire Michele Wood?

- What is the role of imagination in the story?
- How did race, gender, and geography shape Wood's family experiences?

Encourage students to consider why the author, Guadalupe García McCall, would want to share this story with young people.

## VOCABULARY

(Reading Standards, Craft & Structure, Strand 4)

(Language Standards, Vocabulary Acquisition & Use, Strands 4–6)

(Speaking & Listening Standards, Comprehension & Collaboration, Strands 1 and 2)

The story contains several content-specific and academic words and phrases that may be unfamiliar to students. Based on students' prior knowledge, review some or all of the vocabulary below.

Encourage a variety of strategies to support students' vocabulary acquisition: look up and record word definitions from a dictionary, write the meaning of the word or phrase in their own words, draw a picture of the meaning of the word, create a specific action for each word, list synonyms and antonyms, and write a meaningful sentence that demonstrates the definition of the word. (Many of the Spanish words can be found in the book glossary, but there are also some that are not included. Students could be encouraged to create a log of these words—they will not be listed here.)

### Content Specific

ancestors, plantation, slavery, enslaved, Mississippi Delta, Civil War, sharecropping, inherit, mule, masters, livestock, crops, field hollers, spirituals, Blues music, harmonica, baptisms, rejoice, confections, acres, foremothers, frocks, steel mills, boll weevils, self-sufficient, segregation

### Academic

imagine, curious, tales, history, memories, continuation, heritage, symbols, converted, exploring, borrow, pinwheels, cycles, harmony, tiresome, precious, reserved, vows, congregate, faith, harvest, opportunities, dignified, clutching, endure, salve, shenanigans, excruciating, mortgage, upheaval, obnoxious, conversed, deplorable, corrupted, economize, imperative, dreary, malodorous, diagnosis, blanched, ominous, ordeal, devastate, resilient, circulating, affectionate, wickedness, frayed, gregarious, despair, devoured, perception, wretched, patrons, scraggly, unscathed, apprehension, transcend, concocted, meander, dissipated, trial and tribulation, guttural, malnourishment, reconvene

## AFTER READING

### Discussion Questions

After students have read the book, use these or similar questions to generate discussion, enhance comprehension, and develop appreciation for the content. Encourage students to refer to passages and/or illustrations in the book to support their responses. **To build skills in close reading of a text, students should cite textual evidence with their answers.**

### Literal Comprehension

(Reading Standards, Key Ideas & Details, Strands 1–3)

(Speaking & Listening Standards, Comprehension & Collaboration, Strands 1–3 and Presentation of Knowledge & Ideas, Strand 4)

1. Who is the narrator of the story?
2. Where did Wood grow up?
3. Who did Wood hear stories from as a child?
4. What region of the United States did Wood's ancestors come from?
5. Why does Wood use quilt like backgrounds?
6. When Wood moves from Indiana, where did she move?
7. What is sharecropping?
8. What did Wood's family grow? Why was water important?
9. Why was music important to African American culture?
10. What does jump the broom mean?
11. Why was the church important to African Americans?
12. What does the picture "The Wagon to Freedom" represent?
13. Who is Nat Love?
14. Why was Grandmother Kathryn not allowed to eat in fancy restaurants or hotels?
15. Who are the two women in Wood's self-portrait represent?

### Extension/Higher Level Thinking

(Reading Standards, Key Ideas & Details, Strands 2 and 3 and Craft & Structure, Strands 4 and 6)

(Speaking & Listening Standards, Comprehension & Collaboration, Strands 1–3 and Presentation of Knowledge & Ideas, Strand 4)

1. What symbols reoccur in Wood's work and why?
2. What is the significance of the Civil War in *Going Back Home*?
3. What is the difference between the two illustrations of "Inheritors of Slavery" in the book? What makes you think that?
4. What are the African elements Wood uses in her artwork? Use evidence from the text to support your answer.

5. What motivates Wood to be travel throughout the South? Why?
6. When the author writes, "with hard work, a little luck, and a strong community, my family was able to thrive even under the harshest of conditions"? Do you agree that hard work, a little luck, and a strong community can help people be successful? Why or why not? Consider the illustration as well.
7. Why is it significant that Wood depicts African Americans as self-sufficient? What was life like for African Americans during this time period?
8. The author writes, "We owned business, fought in all of the American wars, and contributed greatly to the building of this country." What are some of the other ways African Americans have contributed to the building of the United States of America?
9. How would you describe the author's relationship with her family history? How is this relationship similar to and different from your relationship with your own history?
10. What does the word "family" mean to Michele Wood?
11. What does the word "home" mean to Michele Wood?
12. Why is it significant that Wood creates her own self-portrait at the end of the book?

### Reader's Response

(Writing Standards, Text Types & Purposes, Strands 1–3 and Production & Distribution of Writing, Strands 4–6)

Use the following questions and writing activities to help students practice active reading and personalize their responses to the book. **Suggest that students respond in reader's response journals, essays, or oral discussion.** You may also want to set aside time for students to share and discuss their written work.

1. What do you think the author and Wood's message to the reader is? Think about possible motivations behind Wood's intentions to write the book. What do you think they wanted to tell young readers?
2. Have students make a text-to-self connection. What kind of connections did you make from this book to your own life? What do Wood's artwork and family experiences, thoughts, and feelings mean to you? What are ways you express your family history?
3. Have students make a text-to-text connection. Did you think of any other books while you read *Going Back Home: An Artist Returns to the South*? Why did you make those connections?
4. Have students make a text-to-world connection. What kind of connections did you make from this book to what you have seen in the world, on the news, or learned about in history? Why did *Going Back Home* make you think of that?
5. How has reading *Going Back Home* impacted your understanding of family and family history? What are some other ways people honor their family?
6. Woods pulls inspiration from members of her family that she's never met and those she has. What does family mean to you? Think of the people in your family who you've never met and stories you may have heard about them. If not a family member, discuss someone who has been influential to you.

### ELL Teaching Activities

(Speaking & Listening Standards, Comprehension & Collaboration, Strands 1–3 and Presentation of Knowledge & Ideas, Strands 4–6)  
(Language Standards, Vocabulary Acquisition & Use, Strands 4–6)

These strategies might be helpful to use with students who are English Language Learners.

1. Assign ELL students to partner-read the story with strong English readers/speakers. Students can alternate reading between pages, repeat passages after one another, or listen to the more fluent reader.
2. Have each student write three questions about the story. Then let students pair up and discuss the answers to the questions.
3. Depending on students' level of English proficiency, after the first reading have students work in pairs to retell either the plot of the story or key details. Then ask students to write a short summary, synopsis, or opinion about what they have read.
4. Have students illustrate a family story of their own.
5. Have students give a short talk about what they think Wood's message is.
6. The book contains several content-specific and academic words that may be unfamiliar to students. Based on students' prior knowledge, review some or all of the vocabulary. Expose English Language Learners to multiple vocabulary strategies. Have students make predictions about word meanings, look up and record word definitions from a dictionary, write the meaning of the word or phrase in their own words, draw a picture of the meaning of the word, list synonyms and antonyms, create an action for each word, and write a meaningful sentence that demonstrates the definition of the word.
7. Link concepts of art as communicating to the student's learning of a new language.
8. Complete frequent checks of understanding.
9. Read aloud a sentence and have students repeat the sentence after you, pointing to each word as they speak.

### Social and Emotional Learning

(Reading Standards, Key Ideas & Details, Strands 1-3 and Craft & Structure, Strands 4-6)  
(Speaking & Listening Standards, Comprehension & Collaboration, Strands 1–3 and Presentation of Knowledge & Ideas, Strand 4)  
(Writing Standards, Text Types & Purposes, Strands 1–2 and Production & Distribution of Writing, Strands 4–6)  
(Language Standards, Vocabulary Acquisition & Use, Strands 6)

Social and emotional learning involves being aware of and regulating emotions for healthy development. In addition to understanding one's own feelings, strong socio-emotional development allows individuals to develop empathy for others and to establish and maintain relationships.

Use the following prompts to help students study the socio-emotional aspects of this book.

1. In what ways was Wood able to use art and imagination to express her feeling about her family's enslaved history?
2. Which illustration in *Going Back Home* best shows an emotion? Explain which emotion you think it is. How does it portray that emotion?

3. Wood's grandmother Kathryn experienced racism and prejudices because of her race. How do you respond to racism or discrimination? When you experience it yourself and/or when you see it happening to others?
4. Choose an emotion that interests you: happiness, sadness, fear, anxiety, joy frustration, hope, perseverance and so on. Illustrate or act out what that emotion looks like in *Going Back Home*.

## INTERDISCIPLINARY ACTIVITIES

(Introduction to the Standards, page 7: Students who are college and career ready must be able to build strong content knowledge, value evidence, and use technology and digital media strategically and capably)

Use some of the following activities to help students integrate their reading experiences with other curriculum areas. These can also be used for extension activities, for advanced readers, and for building a home-school connection.

### English/Language Arts

(Reading Standards, Key Ideas and Details, Strands 1–3, Craft and Structure, Strands 4–6, Integration of Knowledge & Ideas, Strands 7–9, Range of Reading of Text Complexity, Strand 10)

(Writing Standards, Text Types & Purposes, Strands 1–3, Production & Distribution of Writing, Strands 4 and 6, Research to Build & Present Knowledge, Strands 7–9, Range of Writing, Strand 10)

(Speaking and Listening Standards, Comprehension and Collaboration, Strands 1–3, Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas, Strands 4–6)

- **Ask students to use the Bio Cube tool** (<http://www.readwritethink.org/classroom-resources/student-interactives/cube-30057.html>) **from ReadWriteThink.org to write their own personal biography based on *Going Back Home*.** Have students reflect on this process afterwards. What was it like to write their own biography? What did they learn about themselves during their writing?
- **What makes your family unique?** What activities do you do together and interests do you share with one member in your family? Describe in an essay a time you spent with a family member in your life and why that memory is special to you.
- **The rich, varied, and poetic language used in *Going Back Home* provides an opportunity for students to develop their vocabulary skills in authentic contexts.** Challenge students to learn and practice using the academic and content-specific words listed in this teacher's guide:
  - Before reading: Provide students with a list of the vocabulary words to sort into categories (e.g. very familiar, somewhat familiar, and unfamiliar).
  - During reading: Have students make note of the vocabulary words as they encounter them in *Going Back Home*. They can underline, highlight, or keep a log. Have students predict what the words mean based on context clues.
  - After reading: Have students work in pairs to look up the definitions of the "unfamiliar" words on their combined lists. Were their predictions correct? Post the new vocabulary words on your word wall.
- **Tell students to imagine they will be interviewing the Michele Wood for a local newspaper or talk show.** Ask students develop a list of five interview questions they want

to ask. What do they want to learn about slavery, art, forms of expression, and so on? Lead a class discussion, creating a combined list of questions and then narrowing that list down to ten questions.

- **Have students imagine they are Michele Wood as a child.** Write a thank you letter to her ancestors for her help, actions, or advice.
- **Ask students to write a letter to their ancestors.** Review the structure and tone of a friendly letter. Students should describe the stories they hear about their ancestors and include questions to learn more about them.
- **Ask students to reflect on ways their school involves and celebrates families.** What could their school do to recognize the diversity of families and family structures? In a letter to their principal or in a letter to the editor to their school newspaper, encourage students to present ways that foster family and community pride at school.
- **Generate a discussion about how we learn about the past.** When students volunteer that we read books, ask them about other ways to learn about history, such as songs, poems, interviews, or family stories. Discuss oral histories and interviews as a way to learn about times and events. Have students use oral histories to find out more about their own family history.

### Social Studies/Geography

(Reading Standards, Key Ideas and Details, Strands 1–3, Craft and Structure, Strands 4–6, Integration of Knowledge & Ideas, Strands 7–9, Range of Reading of Text Complexity, Strand 10)

(Writing Standards, Text Types & Purposes, Strands 1–3, Production & Distribution of Writing, Strands 4 and 6, and Research to Build & Present Knowledge, Strands 7–9, Range of Writing, Strand 10)

(Speaking and Listening Standards, Comprehension and Collaboration, Strands 1–3, Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas, Strands 4–6)

- **Design a lesson or unit on African American art in the United States.** Learning goals should highlight key aspects of the biographies of artists, the use of artist during time of political unrest, and inspirations artists were drawing from. What challenges did artists face due to race, gender, class, sexuality or other factors? Consult the Smithsonian American Art Museum (<https://americanart.si.edu/art/highlights/african-american>) as well as Oxford Art Online (<https://www.oxfordartonline.com/page/african-american-art>).
- **Ask students to research different Southern states in the early 20th century.** What was going on socially and politically at that time in history? What challenges did African Americans who lived in the South face? What did towns look like? Discuss how this information helps students understand Wood's family experiences.
- **Design a lesson or unit on the Civil War (1861–1865) and its effects on people of the United States.** PBS has organized a list of resources from the Library of Congress that offer online collections featuring maps, photographs, speeches, and other primary source documents from the Civil War. Additionally, there are lesson plans and primary source sets for further information and Civil War exploration in the classroom (<http://www.pbs.org/kenburns/civil-war/classroom/resources-library-congress/>). The Zinn Education Project also offers a list of free resources, lesson plans, and activities to use with students on the Civil War. Lesson plans range from election role play, walking tours with maps, and other handouts that contain primary source documents for students to examine (<https://zinnedproject.org/teaching->

[materials/?period=1850](#)). Ask students to think about the following guiding question: How did the Civil War impact African American communities? In a graphic organizer, have students list the cause and effects of the Civil War on Americans overall and African Americans specifically.

- **Using a map and colored pushpins, have students trace African American displacement and migration in the chronology, beginning with the enslavement of Africans, through the South, the influence of slave songs and the development of "Blues," and moving North with the Great Migration.** Discuss the factors influencing migration: Why were Africans forced to leave their homeland? Why did these people leave their homes in the South after the Civil War? What were they moving away from? What were they moving to?
- **Design a lesson on African American cowboys in the United States.** As a hook for readers, watch video on Nat Love ([https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t3N8V5\\_idt0](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t3N8V5_idt0)).

### Art, Media & Music

(Reading Standards, Key Ideas and Details, Strands 1–3, Craft and Structure, Strands 4–6, Integration of Knowledge & Ideas, Strands 7–9, Range of Reading of Text Complexity, Strand 10)

(Writing Standards, Text Types & Purposes, Strands 1–3, Production & Distribution of Writing, Strands 4 and 6, Research to Build & Present Knowledge, Strands 7–9, and Range of Writing, Strand 10)

(Speaking and Listening Standards, Comprehension and Collaboration, Strands 1–3, Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas, Strands 4–6)

- **Have students map different states in the South.** Have them create and write their own postcards to a family member or loved one from one of those places using the Postcard Creator from ReadWriteThink.org. (<http://www.readwritethink.org/classroom-resources/student-interactives/postcard-creator-30061.html>)
- **Have the students look through the book and select one picture to which they will respond.** Ask each student to share his or her response with the group. Ask, how did you pick your picture? What does the picture make you feel? How do the colors affect you? What stories do you see in the pictures? Have the group read the text on the accompanying pages. Ask students to identify the theme of the text. How does that theme connect to the illustration? How does it connect to the stories they saw in the image?
- **Have students create their own family tree with the places their different family members lived.** Consult the Creating Family Timeline from ReadWriteThink.org (<http://www.readwritethink.org/classroom-resources/lesson-plans/creating-family-timelines-graphing-870.html?tab=4>).
- **Ask students to write their own poem about a cause they care about or difficult moment they had to overcome.** Encourage students to have their poems reflect their personal experiences and/or their feelings and opinions. Have students perform their work. Refer to ReadWriteThink.org (<http://www.readwritethink.org/parent-afterschool-resources/tips-howtos/help-child-write-poem-30317.html?main-tab=2>)
- **Put students in small groups.** Have them discuss reactions to the artworks in *Going Back Home*. What stood out? How do they express emotion?
- **Have students create a family portrait.** Provide students with time and materials to

create their family portrait and display them in your classroom or hallway. Have students share and explain why they enjoy the book and how it has inspired them.

- **Ask students to create their own self-portrait and offer an explanation modeled after Wood's self-portrait.** Provide students with time and materials to create their self-portraits and display them in your classroom or hallway.
- **Set up a listening station devoted to African and African American music, particularly the Blues.** Leave covers and liner notes with commentary and lyrics available for students to explore.
- **As a follow-up activity, encourage students to listen to the music during independent work time.** Leave a notebook at the listening station and ask the students to use it as a group music journal. Ask students to record the music they listened to and their reactions to the music in the journal. Later, refer back to these notes as you discuss the book.
- **Brainstorm a definition of rhythm based on the exercise from the previous activity.** Ask students to compare their definitions of rhythm with a dictionary definition. Talk about how different rhythms can make you think or feel differently. How does music and rhythms connect to feelings?

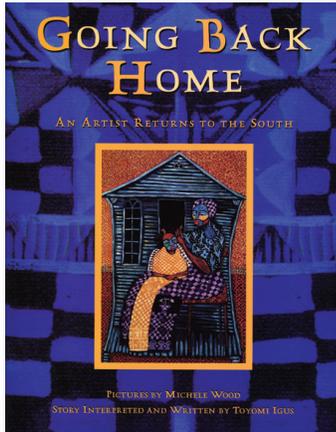
### School-Home Connection

(Reading Standards, Integration of Knowledge and Ideas, Strands 7 and 9)

(Writing Standards, Text Types & Purposes, Strands 1-3, Production & Distribution of Writing, Strand 4, and Research to Build & Present Knowledge, Strands 7-9, Range of Writing, Strand 10)

(Speaking and Listening Standards, Comprehension and Collaboration, Strands 1-3, Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas, Strands 4-6)

- **Ask students to create portraits of people who are their personal role models through drawing, collage, or photograph.** In writing, students should describe what actions and qualities they admire about this person. Students can write in prose or submit a poem or song.
- **Ask students to create their own self-portrait and after viewing Wood's self-portrait.** Have students reflect on their experience and describe what it was like to make their own self-portrait. What did they learn about themselves?
- **Have students interview a parent, guardian, or adult mentor about their family history.** Where did they live? Where did they travel? How did they end up where they are now? Where were their family's "origins"?
- **If accessible, have students and families research other titles featuring African American women artists.** Lee & Low titles include *Little Melba and Her Big Trombone* ([leeandlow.com/books/little-melba-and-her-big-trombone/teachers\\_guide](https://www.leeandlow.com/books/little-melba-and-her-big-trombone/teachers_guide)) and *In Her Hands: The Story of Sculptor Augusta Savage* ([leeandlow.com/books/in-her-hands](https://www.leeandlow.com/books/in-her-hands)).



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### By Mail:

Lee & Low Books, 95 Madison Avenue,  
New York, NY 10016

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

**Toyomi Igus** is the author and editor of several books for children, including *Two Mrs. Gibsons* and the award-winning *Going Back Home*, her brilliant account of artist Michele Wood's personal journey to the South. The former Editor and Publications Director for UCLA's Center for African American Studies, she lives in Los Angeles, California.

## ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATOR

**Michele Wood** is an illustrator, painter, aspiring filmmaker, colorist, clothing and jewelry designer, living in Atlanta, Georgia. She accomplished her Master in Divinity at Christian Theological Seminary, where she was the Artist in Residence 2015-2018. She was awarded the Young Church Women United Award 2016. Her first book, *Going Back Home*, was honored with an American Book Award Before Columbus Foundation. Wood's second book, *i see the rhythm* received the Coretta Scott King Award in 1999 for Illustration.

## AWARDS

**American Book Award**, Before Columbus Foundation

**Bulletin Blue Ribbon Book**, Bulletin of the Center for Children's Books

**California Collections**, Elementary School, California Readers

**National Parenting Publications Award**, NAPPA

**Skipping Stones Honor Award**, *Skipping Stones Magazine*

## ABOUT LEE & LOW BOOKS

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