



Houghton Mifflin is pleased to announce the publication of
Music for Alice
Written and illustrated by **Allen Say**



As a girl, Alice loved to dance, but the rhythms of her life offered little opportunity for a foxtrot, much less a waltz. World War II erupted soon after she was married, and Alice and her husband—along with many other Japanese Americans—were forced to leave their home and report to an assembly center. Undaunted, Alice and Mark learned to make the most of every circumstance, from their stall in the old stockyard in Portland to the decrepit farm in the Oregon desert, with its field of stones. Like a pair of skilled dancers, they sidestepped adversity to land gracefully amid golden opportunity. Together they turned a barren wasteland into a field

of endless flowers, creating the largest gladiola bulb farm in the country. Such achievements did not come without effort and sacrifice, though, and Alice often thought her dancing days were long behind her. But as her story testifies, life is full of change.

In this striking book, Allen Say introduces readers to the remarkable story of the life of a woman whose perseverance and resilience serve as an inspirational reminder that dreams can be fulfilled, even when least expected.

Praise for *Music for Alice*

“As always with Say, the exquisite watercolors tell an American story.”—*Booklist*

“[Say] accentuates the historical milieu with a palette of faded, often sepia tones and still, composed subjects who stare frankly at the audience—as though fully aware of the camera turned on their ordinary but eventful lives.”—*Publishers Weekly*

“Each of Say’s exquisite paintings tells a story; together they create a moving testament to a life of hard work and dreams—dreams that find fulfillment in anticipated ways.”—*Kirkus Reviews*

Caldecott medalist **Allen Say** is the author and illustrator of many acclaimed books for readers of all ages. He was introduced to the real-life Alice Sumida through his shiatsu masseuse, Akira Imai. Mr. Imai had learned his trade from the founder of shiatsu, but also had a passion for ballroom dancing. According to Mr. Say, “Well, Alice was another patient of his and he told me the incredible story of her life, scheming, as it turned out, that I would find her story so interesting that I might consider doing a book.” Allen Say is a full-time writer and illustrator living in Portland, Oregon.

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