



Mama Miti: Wangari Maathai and the Trees of Kenya

By Donna Jo Napoli

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Through artful prose and beautiful illustrations, Donna Jo Napoli and Kadir Nelson tell the true story of Wangari Muta Maathai, known as “Mama Miti,” who in 1977 founded the Green Belt Movement, an African grassroots organization that has empowered many people to mobilize and combat deforestation, soil erosion, and environmental degradation. Today more than 30 million trees have been planted throughout Mama Miti’s native Kenya, and in 2004 she became the first African woman to win the Nobel Peace Prize. Wangari Muta Maathai has changed Kenya tree by tree—and with each page turned, children will realize their own ability to positively impact the future.

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Editorial Review

From [Booklist](#)

Luminous illustrations are the highlight of this third recent picture-book biography of Wangari Maathai, the Kenyan environmental activist who received the 2004 Nobel Peace Prize. In brief, poetic lines that have a folktale tone, Napoli describes how “wise Wangari” helped Kenyan village women solve problems from hunger to dirty water with the same solution: “Plant a tree.” Eventually, Maathai’s Green Belt movement became a worldwide mission. Jeanette Winter’s *Wangari’s Trees of Peace: A True Story from Africa* and Claire A. Nivola’s *Planting the Trees of Kenya: The Story of Wangari Maathai* (both 2008) integrate more background context, and readers encountering Maathai’s story for the first time here will need to start with the appended short biography in order to understand the story’s generalized references. Most noteworthy is Nelson’s vibrant collage artwork, which features soaring portraits and lush landscapes in oil paint and printed fabrics. An author’s note about sources and a glossary of Kikuyu and Swahili words used throughout the text close this moving tribute, which will partner well with Winter’s and Nivola’s titles. Grades K-3. -- Gillian Engberg

Review

* “Nelson’s pictures, a jaw-dropping union of African textiles collaged with oil paintings, brilliantly capture the villagers’ clothing and the greening landscape.... **This is, in a word, stunning.**”

—*Kirkus*, STARRED REVIEW

* “Nelson’s (*We Are the Ship*) breathtaking portraits of Maathai often have a beatific quality; bright African textiles represent fields, mountains, and Maathai’s beloved trees... Napoli (*The Earth Shook*) creates a vivid portrait of the community from which Maathai’s tree-planting mission grows.”

—*Publishers Weekly*, STARRED REVIEW

“A beautiful introduction for children just learning about the Greenbelt Movement.”

—*School Library Journal*

“Luminous illustrations are the highlight of this third recent picture-book biography of Wangari Maathai, the Kenyan environmental activist who received the 2004 Nobel Peace Prize. In brief, poetic lines that have a folktale tone, Napoli describes how “wise Wangari” helped Kenyan village women solve problems from hunger to dirty water with the same solution: “Plant a tree.” Most noteworthy is Nelson’s vibrant collage artwork, which features soaring portraits and lush landscapes in oil paint and printed fabrics.”

—*Booklist*

“Illustrator Kadir Nelson intensifies the text's tribute to East African culture, mixing oil paints and textiles in collages that capture the quest of women looking for answers as well as the beauty and vastness of Maathai's project . . . Especially dazzling... Makes vibrantly clear how strong and resourceful Maathai and other African women have been in restoring trees and peace to their world.”

—*The Washington Post*

“This picture book glows from every page as Napoli and Nelson write and illustrate the inspiring story of ecologist and Nobel Peace Prize winner Wangari Maathai.... A lovely, stirring picture book with a simple message for us all: in the midst of change, development, and upheaval, there is always a place for wisdom and peace.”

— Mark David Bradshaw, Watermark Books, Kansas

"Will inspire children of all ages."

—Ellen Scott, The Bookworm, Omaha, Nebraska

"This is the true story of Wangari Muta Maathi, a Kenyan woman who helped to bring trees back to a sadly deforested country. Her grassroots efforts to help her people and the environment at the same time had a profound effect not only on Kenya, but on people all over the world who heard her story and who learned her lessons. With a lyrical text and stunning multimedia art, this picture book is a must for every reader, both young and not so young." -- Through the Looking Glass Children's Book Review

About the Author

Donna Jo Napoli is the acclaimed and award-winning author of many novels, both fantasies and contemporary stories. She won the Golden Kite Award for *Stones in Water* in 1997. Her novel *Zel* was named an American Bookseller Pick of the Lists, a *Publishers Weekly* Best Book, a Bulletin Blue Ribbon, and a *School Library Journal* Best Book, and a number of her novels have been selected as ALA Best Books. She is a professor of linguistics at Swarthmore College in Pennsylvania, where she lives with her husband. Visit her at DonnaJoNapoli.com.

Kadir Nelson is an award-winning American artist whose works have been exhibited in major national and international publications, institutions, art galleries, and museums. Nelson is the illustrator of many beloved, award-winning, and bestselling picture books including, *We Are the Ship: The Story of Negro League Baseball*, winner of the Coretta Scott King and Robert F. Sibert Award; *Thunder Rose*, written by Jerdine Nolen, which received a Coretta Scott King Illustrator Honor Award; *Ellington Was Not a Street*, written by Ntozake Shange, which received a Coretta Scott King Illustrator Award; *Hewitt Anderson's Great Big Life*, written by Jerdine Nolen, which won the 2005 Society of Illustrators Gold Medal; and *Mama Miti: Wangari Maathai and the Trees of Kenya* by Donna Jo Napoli called “stunning” by *Kirkus Reviews* in a starred review. He is also the illustrator of Deloris Jordan and Roslyn M. Jordan's *Salt in His Shoes* and Spike Lee and Tonya Lewis Lee's *Please, Baby, Please* and *Please, Puppy, Please*. Kadir Nelson lives in Los Angeles.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Edward Gilbert:

This *Mama Miti: Wangari Maathai and the Trees of Kenya* book is simply not ordinary book, you have after that it the world is in your hands. The benefit you get by reading this book is actually information inside this e-book incredible fresh, you will get information which is getting deeper anyone read a lot of information you will get. This particular *Mama Miti: Wangari Maathai and the Trees of Kenya* without we comprehend teach the one who examining it become critical in thinking and analyzing. Don't always be worry *Mama Miti: Wangari Maathai and the Trees of Kenya* can bring any time you are and not make your case space or bookshelves' come to be full because you can have it in the lovely laptop even cell phone. This *Mama Miti: Wangari Maathai and the Trees of Kenya* having great arrangement in word in addition to layout, so you will

not truly feel uninterested in reading.

Donald Perkins:

Do you one among people who can't read satisfying if the sentence chained from the straightway, hold on guys this aren't like that. This Mama Miti: Wangari Maathai and the Trees of Kenya book is readable by you who hate those straight word style. You will find the details here are arrange for enjoyable looking at experience without leaving possibly decrease the knowledge that want to offer to you. The writer of Mama Miti: Wangari Maathai and the Trees of Kenya content conveys prospect easily to understand by lots of people. The printed and e-book are not different in the content but it just different such as it. So , do you even now thinking Mama Miti: Wangari Maathai and the Trees of Kenya is not loveable to be your top listing reading book?

Bradley Smith:

Hey guys, do you wishes to finds a new book to see? May be the book with the title Mama Miti: Wangari Maathai and the Trees of Kenya suitable to you? The book was written by popular writer in this era. Often the book untitled Mama Miti: Wangari Maathai and the Trees of Kenya is one of several books which everyone read now. This particular book was inspired a number of people in the world. When you read this guide you will enter the new way of measuring that you ever know prior to. The author explained their plan in the simple way, consequently all of people can easily to comprehend the core of this guide. This book will give you a great deal of information about this world now. In order to see the represented of the world with this book.

George Bash:

The book untitled Mama Miti: Wangari Maathai and the Trees of Kenya contain a lot of information on that. The writer explains the girl idea with easy means. The language is very clear and understandable all the people, so do certainly not worry, you can easy to read the item. The book was published by famous author. The author will take you in the new age of literary works. It is easy to read this book because you can read on your smart phone, or product, so you can read the book throughout anywhere and anytime. If you want to buy the e-book, you can available their official web-site along with order it. Have a nice learn.

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