



www.echointhedistance.com

Shayla Michelle

JOURNALIST & AUTHOR OF
"ECHO IN THE DISTANCE"

MEDIA KIT

Hi. I'm Shayla!

AUTHOR, SPEAKER & JOURNALIST



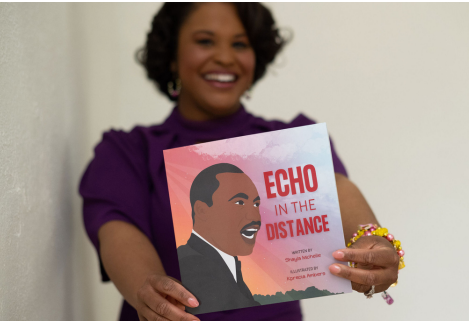
I'm so excited to hold a dream in my hands!

For nearly 17 years, I've been telling stories as a television journalist. Now, I'm pouring my love for writing into my illustrated book "Echo In the Distance" for children grades 3-5. The book is scheduled for release on Juneteenth (June 19) 2023 with distribution through IngramSpark. This story, however, is decades in the making.

This year marks 60 years since Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. shared his dream from the steps of the Lincoln Memorial during the March on Washington on August 28, 1963. It also marks 20 years since I first performed my original work, "Do You Hear the Echo In The Distance?" on the campus of Northwestern University in Evanston, Illinois. While a freshman in the Medill School of Journalism, I entered and won the university's "Written Expression Competition" in honor of Dr. King.

In 2003, I performed my original piece at Pick-Staiger Concert Hall. The guest speaker, Dr. Cornel West, was so impressed by my presentation he asked if he could use the line "People are people not color-coated crimes" in one of his speeches.

In 2023, I'm thrilled to memorialize my original work in an illustrated children's book and inspire readers around the world. I hope holding my dream encourages others to pursue their own!



ABOUT THE BOOK

- ✓ Offers vibrant digital illustrations that connect readers with the words, history and likeness of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.
- ✓ Includes clear, descriptive language for students interested in poetry, language development and public speaking
- ✓ Provides bridge between literacy, social studies and current events
- ✓ Serves as a classroom companion to lessons on Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.
- ✓ Accessible to readers in multiple formats, price points

AS SEEN ON

WCCO

WCCO RADIO

CBS NEWS
MINNESOTA

MARKETING SUMMARY

AUTHOR Shayla Michelle Reaves

ILLUSTRATOR Kprecia Ambers

PUB. DATE June 19, 2023

SIZE 48 Pages, 8.5 x 0.25 x 8.5 inches

PUBLISHER

Shayla's Creative Side in partnership
w/Melanin Origins

DISTRIBUTOR IngramSpark

LCCN 2022911795

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EBOOK/KINDLE

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Price: \$6.99

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WHO I WORK WITH

We have been on this journey together for more than a year and recently met in person for the first time! I'm proud to call Kprecia Ambers my illustration partner for Echo In the Distance. She is from North Minneapolis and is the Digital Artist and Creator of KP Inspires Illustration Studio.

Through zooms, emails and text messages, we have worked together to bring words to life through art. The collaboration has been a thoughtful one, filled with conversations I'm sure readers of "Echo In The Distance" will find themselves having too.

We're putting something into the world that we're both truly proud to share. You'll feel the souls in the pages. I could not have asked for a better partner in this process.

From the Author

Echo In The Distance pays tribute to Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and his dream shared in the iconic "I Have A Dream" speech during the March on Washington in 1963. The book reflects on the speech, the history that followed and how individual readers have the power to help realize Dr. King's dream.

-Shayla Michelle





LET'S CONNECT!

Echo In The Distance is a book rich with layered conversations. There are opportunities to discuss creative choices within the pages, life choices beyond the book and how individuals have the power to help realize Dr. King's Dream in their own lives.

I'm open to connect with schools, podcasts, print, radio, television, libraries or organizations focused on encouraging youth and adults to dream big. I'm open to discuss virtual and in-person options.

SPEAKER TOPICS

- ✓ MODERATED Q&A
- ✓ AUTHENTICITY
- ✓ INSPIRATION
- ✓ HUMAN CONNECTION, EMPATHY
- ✓ STORYTELLING
- ✓ MOTIVATION

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TESTIMONIAL

"[Echo In The Distance] will support students' budding knowledge of the figurative language, author's craft/purpose, text structure and the overall genre of poetry. It will also be an excellent bridge between social studies, and current events. As a curriculum writer for my school, I am anticipating the completion of this project. This piece will be a fantastic addition to a literacy/social studies unit because of the way it engages students in text analysis based on their knowledge of poetry, the event, and the surrounding events...I can see students analyzing the 'I Have a Dream' speech, analyzing your poetry, and then writing about what they hear the echoes telling them, what action they will take, or what changes they want to make within their worlds. **Your stories/writings are much needed. I am so excited about this journey you are on. Whatever you decide to do with your stories, know you are changing the world through your words.**"

SHIREE TURNER-FOWLER

LITERARY SPECIALIST &
CURRICULUM WRITER



How are you feeling right now?

Still taking it all in... processing the moment. This feels surreal. You spend the bulk of your time in the aspiration (20 years). I've only held the copy of the book in my hand for a few weeks!

Why did you decide to do this book?

I always loved creative writing before I even knew I wanted to be a journalist. I have tons of unpublished stuff. I knew I wanted to publish a book, just never knew when or how. I saw how this piece connected with people so many years ago when I performed it my freshman year of college. I wanted to bring the words to life through illustration.

You literally just met your illustrator in person for the first time in April 2023!

Yes, I met my illustrator Kprecia Ambers when she came to the station to record the story this week! She's from North Minneapolis. Her work is so vibrant and colorful. When I saw her illustration of Dr. Martin Luther King, I knew this was the person I wanted to work with for this project. We started this process more than a year ago. We connected via zoom, text message and email working together our way through the illustrations, one batch at a time. I believe we're putting something into the world we're both proud to share with every reader of "Echo In The Distance"

This was a first for both of you!

Yes! This was my first book and her first time illustrating a children's book. I think sometimes it's easier to go with people who have had more experience, but you can never get experience if you don't have a chance. I had no doubt that Kprecia was the right illustrator for my project and as you see--- and you may feel---the pages have a soul. You feel something when you see them.

What is the Echo In The Distance?

The Echo In the Distance is Dr. King's Dream. He shared it so many years ago but it's still something people aspire to achieve generations later.

What do you hope people take away from this book?

Echo In The Distance--- I hope children realize they have a part in this story, they can do their part to move the needle a little forward towards realizing the dream Dr. King shared so many years ago. I hope those buying the book for children realize they're holding someone else's dream in their hands. If they're sitting on their own dream, know it's possible to still go out the thing they've always wanted to do. The world needs what they have to offer.

What's next? More books?

Yes! I have two others already written, just needed to take this through the process and learn how it works! One children's book is about Ella Fitzgerald and the other is called "My Father's Crescent Smile." That book is for women and girls who have lost their fathers and they're looking for a message to help find comfort in loss. I wrote the piece many years ago before I lost my dad --but it brought me comfort when I actually did lose him last year. Also, my dad said last spring-- when I started the process of bringing "Echo In The Distance" to publication-- he always wished he thought to write a book. I wouldn't have had the story in "My Father's Crescent Smile," if I didn't have the specific life experiences I had growing up with my dad. He is very much the author of the experience in that story. He'll eventually get his book.

MEDIA RELEASE

Hello!

My name is Shayla Michelle Reaves. For nearly 17 years, I've been telling stories as a television journalist. Now, I'm pouring my love for writing into my illustrated book "Echo In the Distance" for children grades 3-5 scheduled for release on June 19, 2023 with distribution through IngramSpark. That is why I'm reaching out to you today.

This year marks 60 years since Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. delivered his iconic dream from the steps of the Lincoln Memorial in 1963. Echo In the Distance provides a bridge between literacy, social studies and current events. It offers clear, descriptive language for students interested in language development and public speaking. The vibrant illustrations connect readers with the words, history, and likeliness of Dr. King. What truly makes Echo In the Distance stand out from current offerings is how it engages students in text analysis.

Curriculum Writer and Literary Specialist Shiree Turner-Fowler says Echo In the Distance "supports students' budding knowledge of the figurative language, vocabulary, author's craft/purpose, text structure and the overall genre of poetry." It offers a perspective missing in the current marketplace.

My book aligns with two key goals outlined by Marketing Professional Tara Lewis:

"During the pandemic, families and educators of young children looked to books to help subsidize at-home learning; that is, fortunately, something that has stuck around even now. Also, early education curriculum has shifted focus to what some term fictional nonfiction, a story-based account of a historical event, notable figure, cultural significance. [This] book perfectly aligns with both of these important goals in addition to Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. being a staple in classrooms and libraries nationwide."

According to the Cooperative Children's Book Center in the School of Education at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, "out of 3,183 children's books published in the U.S. in 2021, only 436 were about Blacks/African Americans... Books written by authors from diverse races and cultures were similarly under-represented: out of the 3,183 children's books published in the U.S. in 2021, only 307 were written by Black/African American authors."

I would like to help change those numbers by contributing my voice, original ideas, and creativity to classroom learning. I describe myself as a "creative deep-thinker who loves to laugh and help others see the best of who they are." I feel my writing has the power to expand that mission to students nationwide and spark conversation.

Learn more about the book at www.echointhedistance.com. To truly experience the language, I would like to invite you to listen to a reading of the piece. Please send me an email to shaylamichelle@echointhedistance.com and request the link at your convenience.

If you have any questions, have information on how my book may be considered for inclusion in your classrooms or libraries, would like to discuss partnerships, interviews or might be willing to offer a review of my book, I would love to connect with you via the email address above.

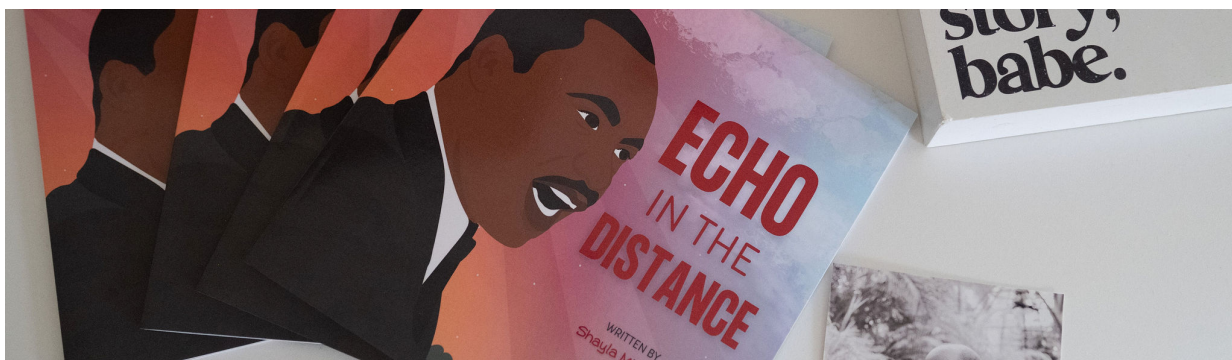
Thank you for your time and I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,
Shayla

Where to Buy

ECHO IN THE DISTANCE

Right now, Echo In The Distance is available for Pre-Order at some of the following locations online. Pre-orders count towards my first week sales and let's booksellers know people are interested in this book! Booksellers will make decisions about how many books to buy and pre-orders increase chances of books hitting bestseller lists during first week sales. Echo In The Distance is scheduled for release on Juneteenth (June 19) 2023.



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I'm also available on Instagram at
Shaylareavestv and Shayla's Creative Side!
Chat soon!

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Shayla