

Author and Illustrator Bio

Cleopatra Bugelas Alexander has been a Philanthropy Consultant for more than 30 years. She focuses her attention on issues of equity, education and the arts.

She was elected to and served on the Evanston/Skokie District 65 School Board in Illinois, was a trustee of the National Museum of Mexican Art and is a past President of the Woman's Board of the Art Institute of Chicago.

She is a graduate of Evanston Township High School and Carleton College.

Cleopatra turned her attention to the issue of teaching children about our globe when she learned that fewer than 30% of U.S. 8th graders scored at, or above, the proficiency level in geography. She believes it is more important than ever for children to learn geographic relationships in order to grasp world issues.

Shiny the Surfing Sea Star was born with this mission in mind.



Shiny the Sea Star lives under the Santa Monica Pier, in Santa Monica, California. Shiny's adventures take children, ages 2 through 7, and their adult caregivers, on treasure hunts using the globe's major rivers as a unifying theme. Having followed this entertaining and visually lively series of trips to the world's major rivers, children will have a grasp of the earth's geography, and an introduction to a number of key population centers and cultures.

In addition, and most importantly, children will learn that our oceans connect us all.

In Shiny's words:

**“We are all connected by water
and we can make friends everywhere!”**



Author Q & A

Why did you write these books?

I wanted young children to learn sooner, rather than later, that we are all connected by water and that we can make friends everywhere.

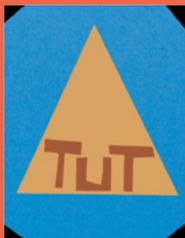
Why did you create Shiny the Sea Star to carry this message?

Having seen sea stars living under the Santa Monica Pier and surfers skimming the waves of the Pacific, I combined the images into Shiny the Surfing Sea Star.



What else do these stories offer?

The books' colorful images, which I created using Origami paper, along with the maps, present pictures of the globe. These pictures give us an understanding of geography. We learn how the continents are linked together by water. We become inspired to dream of visiting distant lands and cultures.



Where does Shiny go?

Shiny plans to surf to all the big rivers of the world. He already has visited the Yangtze in China and the Mississippi in the United States. Coming soon: Shiny visits the Nile. His younger sister, Bella, joins him. Next up: the Seine in France; the Ganges in India; the Amazon in Brazil; the Murray-Darling in Australia; and the Volga in Russia.

Do you do public and school readings?

Absolutely. Having field tested these books at readings for more than 200 young children, I love their questions and ideas. One child suggested that Shiny visit the Milky Way, a river in the sky. He said Shiny could wear a spacesuit to surf there!

Where can we buy your books?

Books are available in English and in Spanish, online and at select bookstores.



Questions?
cleopatra@shinyseastar.com