

BOOKRAPT™

THE BAY OF PLENTY CHILDREN'S LITERATURE ASSOCIATION INC
www.bookrapt.org.nz info@bookrapt.org.nz



***To This Day: for the bullied and beautiful* by Shane Koyczan, illustrated by 30 artists**

Publisher: Walker Books

RRP \$22.99

A forthright view of how bullying affects young people for all their lives. Low self-esteem, self-harm, suicidal thoughts, fear and self-loathing are laid bare in this personal-experience poem by Canadian Shane Koyczan. He produced the poem as an animated YouTube video which has gained world-wide attention.

Cruel behaviour, harsh words, black thoughts and dark colours accentuate the first two-thirds of the book. The combination is heavy and depressing, which is the reality for people who have been bullied. For those afflicted, the crucial turning point is learning how to shut out the negativity and recognise their inner strength, abilities, and beauty.

30 illustrators have contributed powerful art works that complement Koyczan's emotive words. The different art styles add visual impact and reinforce the soul-destroying harm that bullying causes victim, perpetrator, and bystander. Many of the artists have also experienced bullying. In his introduction Koyczan says, "I'm astonished by how connected we are through the things we've endured."

Advocates who help victims of bullying could find this book useful as they guide damaged individuals into accepting themselves as the beautiful, talented young people they are born to be. Shane says the original intention of his poem was, "To put an arm around the shoulder of somebody who needs it."

Reviewed by children's book author, Jean Bennett

Author's website:

<http://www.shanekoyczan.com/>

