



# BOOKRAPT™

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www.bookrapt.org.nz info@bookrapt.org.nz



## ***The Harmonica* by Dawn McMillan & Andrew Burdan**

**Publisher: Scholastic NZ**

**RRP \$19.00**

A touching story about a young boy who finds his Uncle Jack's harmonica in the attic where it has been stored in a dusty old box with postcards, badges, and medals from the war.

Slowly he learns to play it by imitating the sights and sounds around him: both inside from his window:

*the voice of the moon*

*the howl of the window*

*the rhythm of the rain*

and outside, lying in the grass:

*the rustle of the leaves*

*the sounds of the crickets*

*the sway of the trees.*

Not only has Carlos discovered the amazing world of music and how to make it, but he now feels he knows his late uncle.

The full colour double-page illustrations are in soft, almost pastels colours, adding to the gentleness of the story. The one illustration that gives us a war setting is in sepia-type tones for effective contrast to the here and now.

While not a war story, and while not specifically New Zealand except in the illustrations, this is a story that will have universal appeal. Scholastic describe the book as a read aloud for the 3-7 year olds, but it could also be a gentle tale to add to a book-box of war stories for the primary school classroom.

**Author's website:** [www.dawnmcmillan.co.nz](http://www.dawnmcmillan.co.nz)

**Illustrator's website:** [www.andrewburdan.net](http://www.andrewburdan.net)

**Reviewed by Bookrapt member Chris Wright**

