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For Immediate Release

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Children's Book Born on Train

BERKELEY SPRINGS, W.VA.— Conceived in the mind of a now-dead, Michigan artist; birthed on a cross-country train; midwived by teenage writers in rural West Virginia; the new children's book *There's Something Wild In There*, making its debut this month, endured a peculiar gestation.

"It's your book, you do it," declared artist Barbara Saint Denis when her fellow artist and husband, Don, unveiled a set of illustrations for a children's book and asked her to supply words and a publisher. Tossed onto the things-to-do stack, the paintings languished a few years and beyond, as the illustrator passed away, and his Muskegon, Michigan, studio lapsed into an unfamiliar state of disuse.

Apparently destined for oblivion, the dust-gathering illustrations won a reprieve in 2013 during an auspicious encounter on a cross-country train. One evening, seated by chance at the same dining car table, Barbara Saint Denis and thirteen-year-old Samantha Stewart got to chatting about books. In passing, Saint Denis mentioned her late husband's wordless book. Stewart quickly offered help: she and some of her friends at Wind Dance Farm—a rural school in Morgan County, West Virginia—could write the words. "It was a fantastic twist of fate," Stewart said.

The resulting collaboration, published in July, yielded what Don Saint Denis called a "seek and find" book. It presents an exquisite array of lush forest scenes featuring a variety of creatures, who seem to challenge sharp eyes to find their hiding places. Stewart and her Wind Dance friends, Maryam Keeley and Cleta Ullom, wrote eight original poems to offer clues. "We loved the animals in the pictures and decided they would be the main focus," Keeley recalled. The book evokes "a sense of wonder and mystery," Ullom added. *There's Something Wild In There* provides a feast of sight and sound for young readers and non-readers and their parents too.

Artist Don Saint Denis lived most of his adult life in western Michigan where the creatures of forest, lake, and dune inspired his work. Employing a variety of mediums, he created a marvelous assortment of woodcarvings, sculptures, paintings, and drawings.

When writing the poems for *There's Something Wild In There* **Maryam Keeley, Samantha Stewart, and Cleta Ullom** were students at Wind Dance Farm & Earth Education Center whose school year programs and summer camps supplement the curricula of home- and public-school students. **The authors are available for interviews.**

Video short and downloadable cover image available at www.coldrunbooks.com

There's Something Wild In There – ISBN: 978-0-9790808-0-7

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