

Book Review

Pies from Nowhere: ***How Georgia Gilmore Sustained*** ***the Montgomery Bus Boycott***

written by Dee Romito and
illustrated by Laura Freeman

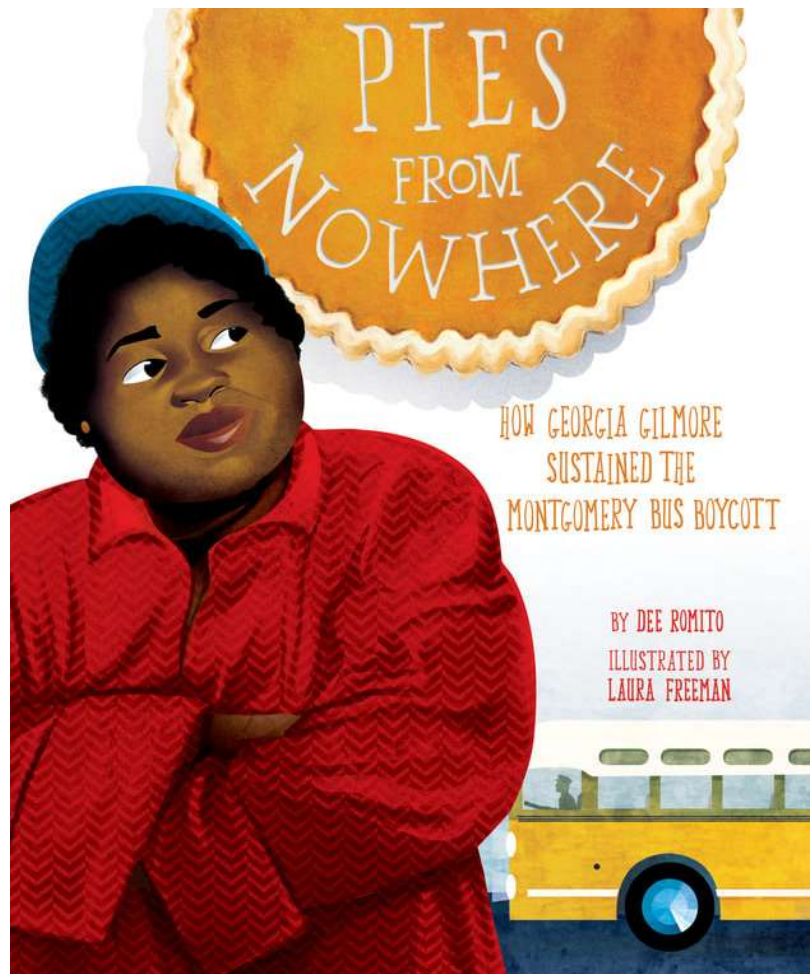
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Review by Suzanne Horton,
Montgomery City-County Public Library

Sweet potato pie, peach pie, red velvet cake, 7-Up cake — oh my! *Pies from Nowhere* is a vivid and engaging book that introduces children to a little-known (outside of Montgomery, at least) figure from the civil rights movement. Georgia Gilmore and her “Club from Nowhere” sold baked goods and other delicacies to help financially support the Montgomery Improvement Association that backed the Montgomery Bus Boycott.

Laura Freeman’s illustrations in the book are dynamic, rich, and realistic. Her colors saturate each page and really serve to draw readers into the story. Of course, Freeman is no stranger to bringing history to life through her work. She also collaborated on *Hidden Figures: The True Story of Four Black Women and the Space Race* (2018) and *Fancy Party Gowns: The Story of Fashion Designer Ann Cole Lowe* (2018).

As author, Dee Romito is clearly devoted to the topic and the tale of Georgia Gilmore, Rosa Parks, Rev.



Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and the Montgomery Bus Boycott. Her story stays faithful to historical events and is conveyed through a window of realism and truth.

Though the bus boycott itself did have some tense moments, this book steers clear of depicting them in its illustrations, with an exception of a scene showing Rosa Parks behind jail bars. Instead, *Pies from Nowhere* chooses to focus more on the movement’s organization and showcases important faces and personalities from history.

Though this is Romito’s first foray into books based on historical fact, she has written several other “chapter book” style works including *Postcards from Venice* (2018) and *No Place Like Home* (2017). The intended audience

for this clever little history is preschool to grade three, but even older children and adults can find merit in the story. As a special bonus, the book even features one of Gilmore’s own recipes for pound cake, written so that children can bake it.

The text also contains a lengthy Author’s Note with more detailed information about Georgia Gilmore and her influence on the Montgomery Bus Boycott.

This picture book comes highly recommended for lower school and public libraries, but academic libraries with a connection to the civil rights movement, Montgomery, or a strong elementary education program might also consider adding it to their collection.

Have story ideas or suggestions for upcoming issues?

Contact Ryan Godfrey at rgodfrey@aps.state.al.us or 334-213-3909.