



# My Night in the Planetarium

By Innosanto Nagara

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From the author/illustrator of the bestseller *A is for Activist* comes *My Night in the Planetarium*, a high-adventure, true story from his childhood in Indonesia. The thrill of spending the night in a museum is the capstone to a story ultimately about free speech, political progress, and artistic defiance. Featuring Inno's gorgeous art style recognizable from *A is for Activist*, *Counting on Community*, and his joyous activism, *My Night in the Planetarium* cleverly and humorously combines history, geography, politics, and activism in an adventure story of childhood wonder, political resistance, and familial connection.

Seven year-old Innosanto's father, a famous Indonesian playwright, is in trouble with the government for his newest play's unfavorable portrayal of governmental power and corruption. After a rousing performance at a large theater complex which also houses the Jakarta Planetarium, Innosanto's father manages to sneak out of town to avoid arrest while Innosanto and his mother spend an exciting night sleeping under the stars in the Jakarta Planetarium.

A beautiful introduction to the history and culture of Indonesia, *My Night at the Planetarium* is an engaging, thought-provoking starting point for a discussion of colonialism, political corruption, and artistic resistance.

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## **My Night in the Planetarium** By Innosanto Nagara Bibliography

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## Editorial Review

From School Library Journal

Gr 2–5—Nagara recounts what happened the night he and his mother stayed in a planetarium after a performance by his father's acting troupe. Nagara's father was an actor, playwright, and activist who often used his art as a means of peaceful protest against the oppressive government of Indonesia. Anticipating a clash with authorities after a final performance, his father escaped with the departing audience while Nagara and his mother hid out for the night in the planetarium, under the stars, so to speak. Nagara does provide some brief historical background of Indonesia: its colonization by the Dutch, its eventual independence, and the rise of a military-run government. The narrative is intimate and occasionally casual, which softens the impact of some of the scarier moments of the story but still engages readers and manages to explain colonization to young listeners. The pacing feels uneven at times, but overall this is a solid read. Collage and mixed-media illustrations are full of vibrant colors and lush detail. A brief epilogue gives further information about Nagara's father and his work. VERDICT A strong choice for larger collections looking to grow their international biography sections.—Jody Kopple, Shady Hill School, Cambridge, MA

Review

"It's a stirring tribute to the power of the arts to challenge injustice, recounted with the confidence of a practiced storyteller."

—**Publisher's Weekly**

"*My Night in the Planetarium* is a sweet, smart tribute to the author's father, to the radical power of art, and to the rich history of Indonesia. With gorgeous illustrations and an engaging narrative, this is art and resistance as seen through a child's eyes, and told by a fantastic storyteller."

--**Kate Schatz**

*Rad American Women A-Z* and *Rad Women Worldwide*

"I loved this story so much, my God it is just like the reality we are living in, just like a mirror, it inspires and guides us to do what we need to do. This story makes us want to cry and scream out: it is enough, let us be brave and stop lying to ourselves, face the reality! It is a story that gives us hope and tells us not to hesitate and it teaches our children to always follow the truth even if it is sometimes difficult."

--**Nabil Al-Raee**

Artistic Director at The Freedom Theater in Jenin refugee camp, Palestine

"Innosanto Nagara's beautifully illustrated *My Night in the Planetarium* is a delightful narrative about Indonesia: the fourth largest country, which we should all know more about. Told from the point of view of himself as a young boy, the story encourages children to be curious, engaged and courageous. What a wonderful lesson about history and people power, written and illustrated with great charm and wit."

--**Medea Benjamin**

*Co-founder, Global Exchange and Code Pink*

"Can children be fascinated by dictatorship, persecution, the struggle against silence in a country very few people have heard about? This enchanting book proves that this sort of story, treated with delicacy and

humor can – and should – reach a wide audience."

**--Ariel Dorfman**

*Playwright, novelist, and human rights activist. Author of *Death and the Maiden*, and many other works.*

## **Users Review**

**From reader reviews:**

**Anthony McDonell:**

What do you consider book? It is just for students since they are still students or the idea for all people in the world, exactly what the best subject for that? Just simply you can be answered for that question above. Every person has distinct personality and hobby for each other. Don't to be pushed someone or something that they don't would like do that. You must know how great along with important the book *My Night in the Planetarium*. All type of book would you see on many sources. You can look for the internet solutions or other social media.

**Latrice Miller:**

Book is to be different for each grade. Book for children right up until adult are different content. As it is known to us that book is very important normally. The book *My Night in the Planetarium* seemed to be making you to know about other knowledge and of course you can take more information. It is quite advantages for you. The publication *My Night in the Planetarium* is not only giving you more new information but also for being your friend when you really feel bored. You can spend your personal spend time to read your publication. Try to make relationship with the book *My Night in the Planetarium*. You never really feel lose out for everything when you read some books.

**James Donovan:**

As people who live in often the modest era should be update about what going on or facts even knowledge to make all of them keep up with the era that is always change and advance. Some of you maybe will update themselves by looking at books. It is a good choice in your case but the problems coming to anyone is you don't know what one you should start with. This *My Night in the Planetarium* is our recommendation to help you keep up with the world. Why, as this book serves what you want and wish in this era.

**Thomas Paris:**

As a pupil exactly feel bored for you to reading. If their teacher questioned them to go to the library or to make summary for some e-book, they are complained. Just small students that has reading's heart or real their interest. They just do what the teacher want, like asked to the library. They go to generally there but nothing reading very seriously. Any students feel that studying is not important, boring along with can't see colorful pics on there. Yeah, it is being complicated. Book is very important for yourself. As we know that on this time, many ways to get whatever we want. Likewise word says, many ways to reach Chinese's country. Therefore , this *My Night in the Planetarium* can make you truly feel more interested to read.

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