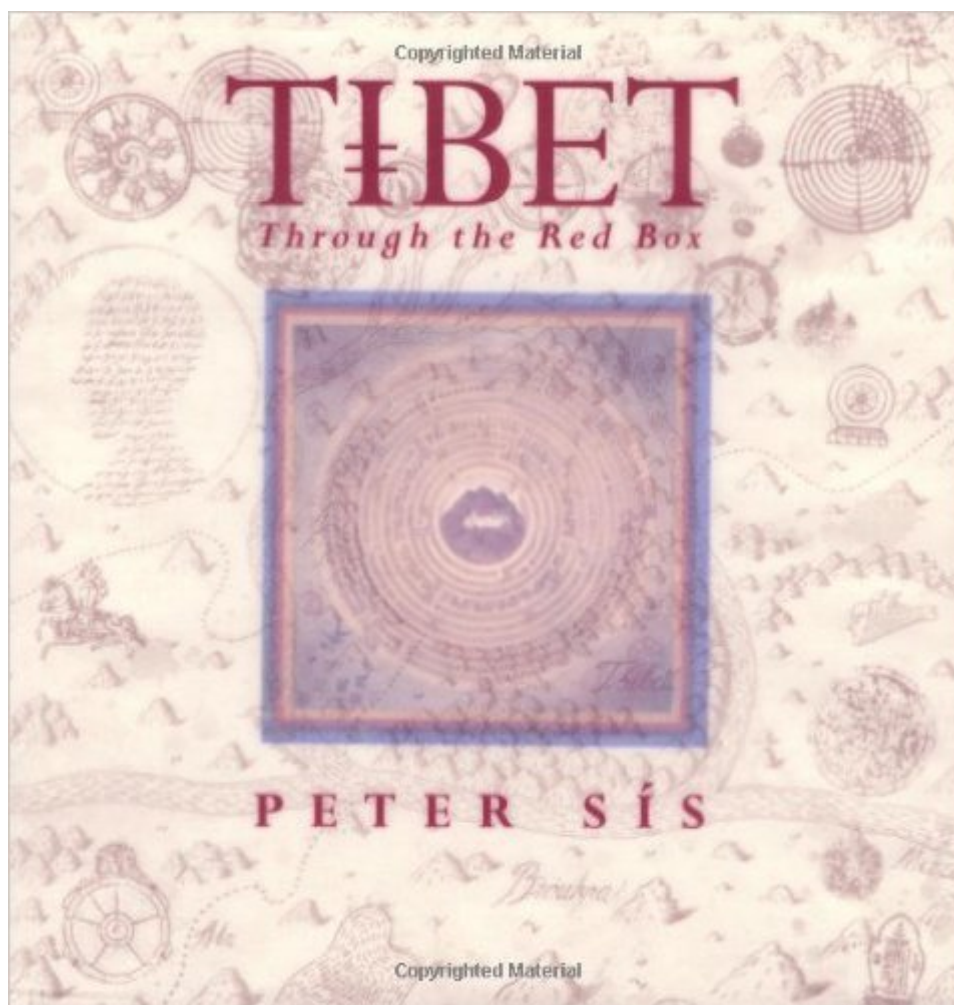


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Tibet Through The Red Box (Caldecott Honor Book)



Synopsis

A father's diary, an artist's memoir. By the author of the best-selling *Three Golden Keys*. While my father was in China and Tibet, he kept a diary, which was later locked in a red box. We weren't allowed to touch the box. The stories I heard as a little boy faded to a hazy dream, and my drawings from that time make no sense. I cannot decipher them. It was not until I myself had gone far, far away and received the message from my father that I became interested in the red box again . . . In New York, Peter Sis receives a letter from his father. "The Red Box is now yours," it says. The brief note worries him and pulls him back to Prague, where the contents of the red box explain the mystery of his father's long absence during the 1950s. Czechoslovakia was behind the iron curtain; Vladimir Sis, a documentary filmmaker of considerable talent, was drafted into the army and sent to China to teach filmmaking. He left his wife, daughter, and young son, Peter, thinking he would be home for Christmas. Two Christmases would pass before he was heard from again: Vladimir Sis was lost in Tibet. He met with the Dalai Lama; he witnessed China's invasion of Tibet. When he returned to Prague, he dared not talk to his friends about all he had seen and experienced. But over and over again he told Peter about his Tibetan adventures. Weaving their two stories together - that of the father lost in Tibet and that of the small boy in Prague, lost without his father - Sis draws from his father's diary and from his own recollections of his father's incredible tales to reach a spiritual homecoming between father and son. With his sublime pictures, inspired by Tibetan Buddhist art and linking history to memory, Peter Sis gives us an extraordinary book - a work of singular artistry and rare imagination. This title has Common Core connections. *Tibet Through the Red Box* is a 1999 Caldecott Honor Book and the winner of the 1999 Boston Globe - Horn Book Award for Special Citation.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I once had the great good fortune of seeing Peter Sis speak before a large audience of New York City Public Librarians. Charming, blessed with an uncommon eloquence, and funny as well Sis spoke of his work over the last few decades. From this speech I learned that Sis designed the poster for the movie of "Amadeus", that he was originally from Prague, and that one of his best works was something called, "Tibet: Through the Red Box". I was intrigued, but months passed and I filed away "Tibet" into my To-Be-Read pile of picture books. It was only with my steady reading of every single Caldecott Honor (of which "Tibet" won one in 1999) that I at last came to the book itself. I expected a title that was some sort of early-reader-this-is-what-Tibet-is kind of a thing. I had apparently forgotten that this was the man who brought us that remarkable Charles Darwin biography, "Tree of Life". "Tibet: Through the Red Box" is no mere picture book. It's a personal history and unreliable memory combined into the ultimate tribute to the author's father. In 1994 Peter Sis received a note from his father that said merely, "The Red Box is now yours". Rushing home, Sis found the box in question and opened it to reveal a diary kept by his father of his time in Tibet in the mid-1950s. Sis the elder was a documentary filmmaker, and as such he was sent by the army film unit to China to make and teach filmmaking. The job was supposed to be about the Chinese highway currently being built in the Himalayas that would open Tibet up to the rest of the world. While there, Sis was separated from his project and explored the world of Tibet deeper than (he suspected) any Czech citizen before him. In this book, Peter Sis takes sections from this diary and illustrates them with his signature dotty style.

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