



The Letterpress Project

Author and Illustrator E-Interviews

Thank you for agreeing to take part in this series of Letterpress Project e-interviews that we are undertaking over the coming months. The Letterpress Project is a not-for-profit initiative that exists to promote the value and pleasures of the physical book and we are keen to get the thoughts of authors and book illustrators about their own influences, experiences and love of books. We are happy for you to make your answers as long or as brief as you are comfortable with and we will undertake not to edit or paraphrase any of your comments without your explicit permission.

Q1. What are your earliest memories of books and reading? For example, did you have a favourite or inspirational book?

I read and loved so many books as a child. My mum was a big fan of reading, so we were fed stories with our porridge and I'm so grateful for that. As a young child, Enid Blyton held my attention more than any other author, with *The Faraway Tree* at the top of the list. I must have read it at least a thousand times.

Q2. What inspired you to become an author / illustrator?

I began writing as soon as I could hold a pen - and as I grew it became the most natural way for me to process the difficult emotions that arose as a consequence of living in an extremely chaotic and abusive environment. I now write for children as a way of supporting them through their own difficulties.

Q3. For you, what makes a successful book or illustration?

Good question! Mmm, I'm not sure - I guess the story has to pull me in from the beginning, if it doesn't then I won't hesitate to put it down. I'm not the sort of reader who battles on through something I'm not enjoying - life's too short for that! It also has to have a satisfying ending - it doesn't have to have a happy one, but I need to feel complete. I love to feel that deep sigh of satisfaction when I turn the final page. I also love it if I've enjoyed the story so much I can't pick up another book for days - a bit like the taste of good food, I want the essence of the story and the characters to linger a little longer inside me.

Q4. Do you have a specific audience in mind when you write your books / plan your illustrations?

Yes, my novels are aimed at age 8-13 year-olds. My picture books (out next year) are for age 3-5.

Q5. What future do you think the physical book has? For example, do you think the electronic book will replace the physical book?

Recent stats have shown that physical book sales are thriving - hurrah! They've overtaken eBooks as the preferred medium. Kindles are fantastic for traveling, but physical books will never die.

Q6. Are you a book collector? Is there a special book you'd love to own?

No. Although I have masses of kids books they're more for research purposes.

Thank you very much for taking time to do this for us. We will advise you when we publish it on the website - www.letterpressproject.co.uk. Please return the completed interview to:

Karen Argent

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