OUTLINE

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Children's Books

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(PAGE 11)

In this issue

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From the editor

Welcome to our first edition for 2014, year of the HORSE! We kick off with a subject close to my heart - children's books!

A year of the horse sketch from my instagram - @ jessesmess. Come say hello!

I've always had a fascination for the world of children's books, and blame my bad eyesight on years of devouring books as a kid. More recently I've worked for a children's book publisher and was lucky enough to travel to Bologna for the annual children's book fair held in March, which opened my eyes to the global industry, extreme talent (illustrators, writers and publishing people) and loved meeting others who shared the children's book bug. In this edition, we meet a pile of them - Erica Wagner, Publisher at Allen and Unwin and Joanna Lake, Co-editions Manager at the Five Mile Press - both wonderful industry figures. Thank you also to Sharon Givoni for another incredibly interesting article about copyright, specifically for illustrators. We really appreciate your generous contribution to Outline.

We also delve into the lives and portfolios of members working in this area - Marc Martin, Tracie Grimwood, Natalie Marshall, Shane McGowan and Mitch Vane. With diverse work all of these artists create illustrations that connect so beautifully with kids - and their parents. Thanks so much for sharing your words, experience and astounding work with us.

A call out... This magazine is made for you and I'd love to hear what you are reading, seeing or hearing about now. Share your work with me so I can share it with all of us and let me know what you'd like to read about in the next edition (contact links below).

Jess Racklyeft, Editor, Outline magazine

Welcome to all our new members!

Jan: Greg Vercoe, Roy Wolff, Melanie Homonnay, Katharina Rocksien, Jenny Wood, William Schorer

Feb: Benjamin Leon, Courtney Frederiksen, Lee Blake, George Rose, Dinda Firmansyah, Ed Dyer, Emma Wiesenekke

{OUTLINE SUBMISSIONS}
If you have an idea for an article, profile, or even a good book or website you'd like to share, email me at outline@illustratorsaustralia.com

Prez sez

Welcome Members to 2014 and wow it's going fast already!

In store for this year we have decided to run a series of workshops at the Abbotsford Convent that revolve around up skilling for illustrators and new skills for students.

You may have completed the survey that we emailed out. We have so many wonderfully talented illustrating members that we have decided to tap into that wealth of knowledge and hold some small group workshops over the year. We will of course let members know first when these will be coming up as there will be limited spots in each, at present the first few will be held at the Convent, computer workshops most likely at Billy Blue Melb and NMIT Fairfield, we are really hoping that other states apart from Victoria will also take up interest in running some workshops.

We are using a new system called weteachme.com which makes it so easy for people to book online, so minimal effort for the organiser! We would love some interstate members to get involved, so if you are interested in running a workshop, you just need a venue, an idea and a presenter, get in touch with us so we chat about it.....

Also from Sept 1st-14th we have a T-shirt exhibition at No Vacancy gallery in Melb, all Silver/Gold members can enter this, details out soon. Download the update to the app 1.4 - https://itunes.apple.com/au/app/ia-pocket/id696296731?mt=8

From May 18th - 10th July I will be overseas doing all things art and wine but we are lucky enough to have the wonderful Elena Leong who will be manning the office over this time. Elena has been working in the office one day per week for a few months now and is a great asset to us.

Thank you to Jess Racklyeft who has brought to you another amazing issue of Outline, thanks to all the contributors for their time and knowledge.

Best wishes until the next issue :).

Jody Pratt (President)

Upcoming: Ned Culic talk

(part of a series of presentations called VOLUME CONTROL)

Monday March 10, 6- 8pm - MADA BUILDING, Theatre G1.04 (Melbourne)

Illustrator, designer, lecturer and multi-award winner Ned Culic will take you on a journey Back to the Future. Last year, an AGDA promo for one of Ned's presentations reverently and accurately referred to him as 'One of Australia's best known illustrators'.

This presentation will be nothing like the AGDA one. In fact, this presentation will cover some topics Ned has never mentioned in tutorials or in other industry gabfests he has been involved in. He will take you on a journey to a more innocent time...a time when an Apple was a piece of fruit, Adobe was the name of a creek in California, Ruling Pens ruled and French Curves were meticulously caressed by precise finished artists' Rapidographs.

Graphic Design was a mysterious profession and its practitioners were revered like gods in some circles....mostly their own. Phrases like 'kerning' and 'Dots-per-inch' were only understood by the anointed chosen few. Ned's presentation will not be a pitiful and pathetic lament for 'The Good Old Days'. It will draw upon references from a bygone era to inspire and energize a new generation of designers. The importance of adaptability to a constantly evolving industry will be highlighted.

Bring on 'The Good New Days.'

Ned Culic has been a member of IA since it's inception in 1989

Share your event with Outline.
Email your details to:

outline@illustratorsaustralia.com

Exhibitions
Events
Book Reviews
Inspiration

Review: Supergraph, profiled in the last edition of Outline, was held on February 14th-16th in Melbourne. Attracting a great variety of art, workshops and events, the launch of this annual event reminded visitors of the array of talent and work created in Australia by illustrators and designers. You could letterpress your own poster, purchase an amazing variety of printed and original work, draw on plates, attend workshops etc - an illustration treasure trove!

I attended the Jacky Winter masterclass "Business End" which dealt with both the cold hard reality and beauty of the illustration industry. Advice on business practicalities was absorbed by the audience (mainly illustrators) and lessons on how to get your work noticed by agencies like Jacky Winter (their advice - creative self-directed projects shared online). We were reminded about the fickle nature of the advertising industry - the trends and movements, good business and illustration books to read, and the important basic ettiquite of running your own business. The owner/manager of the Jacky Winter group Jeremy Wortsman will be interviewed in our next edition. *Images and Text - Jess Racklyeft.*

Joanne Young, freelance illustrator. View Joanne's work at www.joanneyoung.net.

Copyright and the Internet: 10 Common Myths Busted

By Sharon Givoni

"… [T]he most innovative and progressive space we've seen - the Internet - has been the place where intellectual property has been least respected"

Over a decade ago, Internet campaigner, Lawrence Lessig[1], made this observation.

For illustrators, the Internet offers many marketing benefits and opens doors to further, and potentially endless, exposure. However, as with anything in Cyberspace, once your illustrations are posted online you lose a certain degree of control.

As a lawyer, I often see the same issues arise.

However, the numerous myths surrounding copyright are so intertwined that it is best to try and disentangle them one at a time. This is what this article will do— with illustrators in mind.

The mechanics of copyright:

The law in this area is, on the face of it, surprisingly simple.

It comes down to one thing: Do not copy.

Having stated that, it is surprising to see how often artworks are copied just because they have been posted online. Being inspired when you create art is one thing. Reproducing an illustration is quite another and it is the latter that the Copyright Act 1968 (Cth) (Act) seeks to prevent. So let's start at the beginning:

Why do copyright laws exist in the first place?

"What the law of copyright protects is some originality in the expression of thought."

Former Chief Justice Latham (High Court of Australia)[2]

It is clear from the quote that the purpose of copyright law is to provide incentive for people to create original works. It does this by giving creatives, such as illustrators, exclusive rights to control their artistic creations. These rights encourage illustrators to share and contribute to cultural development, and in most cases, it also means that they have a right to be remunerated for their efforts. While some may argue that a true artist doesn't create out of a desire to make money, the commercial reality of any profession is that you need to make money to live.

Now this is all well and good to state, but despite the fact that copyright laws apply to illustrations in Australia and internationally, enforcing copyright in this digital age can be a challenge.

On this point, let's examine some popular misconceptions and dispel the myths. This way if you do feel that your illustrations have been "ripped off", at least you will be one step closer to knowing where you stand.

Myth #1: If it is online, it is free to use

This is not true.

As an illustrator, you would know that just because you display your work online, this is not an invitation for someone else to reproduce or use your work in any way they please.

So long as they are original enough, most illustrations attract copyright protection. This means that the illustrator has the exclusive rights to:

- reproduce the work (eg. reproducing drawings on greeting cards or any other context, whether commercial or not);[3]
- publish the work (eg. allowing it to be featured in a book);[4] and
- communicate the work to the public (eg. posting it on a blog).[5]

1 *Tim O'Reilly and Richard, Code+Law: An Interview with Lawrence Lessig, Legally and Tachnically, Hollywood is Assaulting Some Basic Rights (29 January 2001) openp2p.com, http://www.openp2p.com/pub/a/p2p/2001/01/30/lessig.html.*

2 *Victoria Park Racing & Recreation Grounds Co Ltd v Taylor [1937] HCA 45; Halsbury's Laws of England, 2nd ed., vol. 7, p. 521.*

3 *Copyright Act 1968 (Cth), s 31(b)(i).*

4 *Copyright Act 1968 (Cth), s 31(b)(ii).*

5 *Copyright Act 1968 (Cth), s 31(b)(iv).*

So, for example, if someone else were to reproduce or publish your illustration on their own website, this would infringe two of your "exclusive" rights. This includes your right to reproduce the work and your right to post it online.

Case Study one: When you get ripped off in cyberspace

Bronwyn Simmonds, owner of Melbourne-based graphic design agency, Beni Creative,[6] is all too familiar with this issue. She cites an experience where she designed a logo for her client's online business. By chance, she later discovered that the same logo was being used by an unrelated creative agency in India to promote its own business. Perhaps not as creative as they think they are! Needless to say, they took it down within days of her stern email.

Case study two: T-Shirt torment

Melbourne freelance illustrator, Joanne Young, is also no stranger to this scenario. She has come across people who have posted her artwork on their own websites, claiming to be the artist, one business went as far as reproducing one of her illustrations (which had previously been posted online) on a t-shirt range. A sample of Joanne's popular illustrations are pictured above and as a cover for this article.

6 *http://www.benicreative.com.au/.*

TIP: Monitor the marketplace! Although there are no 100% fool proof solutions to stop people from reproducing your work, copyright warnings and prominent watermarks can be used to help to deter copying.

Myth #2: Your clients paid for it, so they "own it"

Not so.

Clients often wrongly believe that because they pay for an illustration you have created, they own it and can use it without restriction. However, your clients will only have a right to use illustrations you create for the purposes agreed to at the time of commissioning the work. In legal speak, this is known as a licence.

TIP: Always be clear with your clients about the purposes of the illustrations and how they may and may not be used. This should be agreed between you and the client before work on the illustration starts and be recorded in writing. It goes without saying: if your client asks you to sign a legal document, make sure you have understood what it means and what the legal ramifications are before signing.

Myth #3: Copyright can be registered

There is no official registration system to register copyright in Australia, although such systems do exist in countries such as the United States, Canada and India.

In Australia, copyright protection is automatic and "springs" to life when the illustration is created.

TIP: If you plan to commercialise your artwork overseas, or use international websites such the popular etsy.com, registration of copyright may be warranted within those territories. In Australia, display the copyright symbol where possible beside your illustrations (more about this below).

It would look something like this:

© - your full name or company name if the company owns your copyright – Year of creation

Myth #4: Posting the drawing to yourself protects you

Illustrators often ask whether they should post their work to themselves and leave it sealed. The theory behind this practice is that it would serve as proof of creation of the work at a certain point in time, and is protection against claims of copyright infringement. However, because of the ease at which seals can be tampered with, this method is largely ineffective.

Similarly, other methods such as depositing the work in a bank safe or emailing it to yourself are also generally considered ineffective on a practical level. The weakness with these methods is that they risk luring the illustrator into a false sense of security. The illustrator assumes that

doing these things will provide them with protection when they don't mean much legally speaking.

Better options may be to document the evolution of your illustration using methods such as keeping draft sketches or a sketch book, or saving the drawings at each stage of development. Keeping a journal with illustrations or pictures or magazine clippings from which you have sourced your ideas can also help establish the progression and authenticity of your work.

TIP: Ensure your work is original and keep documented records of the process of creation. External back-ups of your digital files also helps.

Myth #5: People can own ideas

Put simply, there is no body of law that protects concepts or ideas in their own right. However it is a concept that people can find hard to grapple with, especially your clients.

There will be situations where an illustrator's client describes what they want in great detail and then when the illustrator draws it, their client believes they hold a stake in it. In practise however, one of the most fundamental principles of copyright law is that it does not protect ideas.

Rather, what is protected is the expression of ideas.

For example, the idea of a woman in a patterned floral dress is just that: an idea. However, the composition, shading and colour choices in the form of a tangible illustration or drawing makes up the way the idea is expressed. The illustrator has created the "expression". Therefore, the illustrator owns the copyright to the illustration.

This concept can trip people up and lead to misunderstandings between illustrators and their clients.

What you, as the illustrator, need to remember is that if your client has had no direct input in the actual creation of the work, you will own the copyright.

An example of direct input could be if a client supplied you with a photograph they had taken, with instructions for you to incorporate it into your work or to simply copy it. In that case, you may be co-owners of copyright.

TIP: If you develop this concern with a particular commission, it may help to politely remind the client at the outset that you own the copyright, even if they provide ideas. You can also incorporate something to this effect in your terms and conditions at the time of quoting. Stating these conditions in writing clarifies potential uncertainty.

Myth #6: Same, same, but different

Strange as it may sound, you can have two very similar illustrations that have been independently created and one

Image by Angie Rehe
http://angierehe.com

is not a copy of another. This may come down to simple coincidence. Coincidence is allowed under the law, and of course, each case will be different.

Sometimes copying can be inferred if it can be shown that the creator of the second work had access to the original drawing.

Fashion illustrator Angie Rehe knows this all too well when she posted an image online only to see a very similar version of it later reproduced by someone else who had originally asked her permission to use it for free which she had refused. (Image above).

Unconscious copying is also not allowed

It often comes as a surprise to people that even if you have "unconsciously" copied something, this can still amount to copyright infringement. The copying does not need to be intentional. So if someone has seen a drawing somewhere and happens to recollect it very well, they can still infringe

copyright by recreating it.

On the flipside, if copying cannot be proven, then you may not have a case for copyright infringement. In fact, this very issue emerged last year when a legal dispute arose between two competing fashion labels in Australia. The case was heard in one court and then appealed – all of this over a butterfly pattern.

Case Study: A case of déjà vu

In 2011, Ladakh Pty Ltd challenged its competitor, Quick Fashion Pty Ltd, over the use of a particular butterfly patterned fabric. Although the two prints looked remarkably similar, after looking at the evidence, the judge said that he could not find the "smoking gun" that would unequivocally prove that one fashion label had copied the textile design of another. Ladakh lost the case[7] and lost again when it appealed the first decision.[8]

TIP: If you see a work that looks identical to one that you have created, remember that coincidences can happen. First, try to find out as much as you can about the work that you think is a copy. If you still believe the work is a copy of yours, you may want to see a lawyer. Under the Act, there is a prohibition against making groundless threats of copyright infringement. Extra care is always warranted before sending any sort of "threatening" letter to someone.

Myth #7: If you change it by ten per cent it's okay

Contrary to popular belief, there is no such thing as the ten per cent rule.

This is because the legal test for copyright infringement is not based upon a percentage of a work. Instead, what counts is both the quality and quantity of what has been "taken". In legal speak the test for copyright infringement is whether an illustration has been "substantially reproduced".[9]

Thus, whether or not there has been an infringement will be determined on a case-by-case basis.

Case Study: Capture the vibe

How much difference does there need to be between two works to avoid copyright issues?

Melanie Blint, a graphic designer who manages the agency, Engana Graphics,[10] recalls an incident where an interior designer asked her to design a wallpaper from "scratch" with a similar design to someone else's vintage-style, dinosaur pattern. The client said they wanted it to be different enough so that there wouldn't be any copyright issues, but still have the same "feel" to it.

TIP: If you are referencing another work when creating your illustration you may be in a danger zone. Remember, while no one can protect an idea per se, if you take too much "inspiration" without enough of your own "perspiration," legal issues may arise.

Myth #8: If it's on the Internet, it's in the "public domain"

Many people think that images on the Internet are in the "public domain" and "free for the taking".

However, the term "public domain" has a specific meaning in law. It generally refers to works that are no longer protected under copyright law, or, as one US judge noted, "open to public use".[11] For example, copyright to a work lasts for seventy years after the death of the author. If a copyright to an illustration has expired, the illustration will then be in the "public domain".

Works such as Da Vinci's Mona Lisa are out of copyright and are in the "public domain" in the true sense of the phrase.

Examples of a Post-modern approach: Mona lives on

The above interpretations of the Mona Lisa are by Blek Le Rat,[12] Graffiti Artist 'Pegasus',[13] and Wikimedia Foundation,[14] respectively.

TIP: Don't make assumptions that just because images appear on the Internet they are in the public domain and not protected by copyright. Confirm whether copyright exists in relation to any image you find on the Internet before using it. If copyright to an image exists, obtain a

7 *Ladakh Pty Ltd v Quick Fashion Pty Ltd & Anor [2011] FMCA 519.*
8 *Ladakh Pty Ltd v Quick Fashion Pty Ltd [2012] FCA 389.*
9 *Copyright Act 1968 (Cth), s 14.*
10 *http://www.enganagraphics.com.au/.*
11 *Morgan v. Cree, 46 Vt. 773, 786, 14 Am.Rep. 640.*
12 *© Blek Le Rat Mona Lisa (2012). Colour screen print, 17'1/2 x 23. Under Creative Commons Attribution Share-Alike 2.0 Generic Licence accessible at: http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/2.0/deed.en.*
13 *© Pegasus, Mona Lisa, (2013, Islington London), Street Art/Graffiti.*
14 *© Wikimedia Foundation, Stylized Mona Lisa (2010) http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Stylized_Mona_Lisa.svg. Under Creative Commons Attribution – Share-Alike 3.0 Unreported Licence accessible at: http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0/deed.en.*

licence from the owner before attempting to use it.

Myth # 9: "Creative Commons" works are acceptable to use

Not quite. There's a catch.

But first, what does the term Creative Commons mean? It is basically a licensing system that's been around since 2001 and has been designed by people who want to share their works. This means that by uploading and designating it as a Creative Commons licence, the author is allowing you to do more with their work than if it was protected under traditional copyright.

However, this does not mean that anyone can do anything with it. One of the most important rules with Creative Commons is that the original author must always be credited and that you must comply with the terms of the licence, otherwise the whole purpose of the system is defeated.

There are six different licences that apply to Creative Commons works. These may include giving others the ability to use or modify the work, or the licence may limit use of the work to a non-commercial context.

TIP: If you incorporate illustrations into your works which fall under a Creative Commons licence, take note of what you can and what you cannot do with that work and always give the original creator credit.

Myth # 10: You must use the "©" symbol in order to be legally protected

The copyright symbol is a useful tool to remind others that you own copyright in a particular illustration. However, it is not legally necessary to display it for your work to be protected. You'll recall from earlier that copyright "springs" into life as soon as an illustration is created, so long as it is original and substantial enough.

Although a copyright symbol is not necessary, if you do use the copyright symbol on your illustrations, the Court makes a presumption that you own the copyright.[15]

TIP: While it is not necessary to display the copyright symbol on your works, it can help to deter potential "copycats".

Bonus Myth: Copyright is lost if it is uploaded on a social media platform (such as Facebook)

Generally speaking, no.

The terms and conditions of most social media websites usually provide that you retain copyright in all of your illustrations. However, if you upload your illustrations to social media websites you may lose a degree of control to your work. This is because when you upload an illustration to a social media platform you generally grant the site operator, under its terms of usage, a non-exclusive, transferrable, royalty-free, world-wide licence to exhibit your work.[16]

TIP: Before uploading illustrations to social media websites, such as Facebook or Instagram, check the terms of usage as they change frequently.

Conclusion

Something that is common to many illustrators is the feeling that sometimes they have weaker bargaining power. However, as more illustrators become aware of their legal rights, this strengthens the bargaining power of the industry as a whole. Hopefully this article has sketched out (excuse the pun) some useful general legal principles for you to follow and apply to your own day to day work in this industry. However, as with most things in life, there are often exceptions to the general principles covered, so don't take the above as if it is "set in stone".

About the writer

Sharon Givoni is an intellectual property lawyer with many clients in the creative industry. She has run her own legal practise for some 20 years, has spoken at the Illustrator's Australia annual conference in 2013 and is the author of 'Owning It: A Creative's Guide to Copyright, Contracts and the Law', published by Creative Women's Circle. For more details about the book, go to: www.owningit.com.au.

Sharon can be contacted by email (sharon@iplegal.com.au) or called on 0410 557 907 or 03 9527 1334. To view her website, go to: www.sharongivoni.com.au.

Disclaimer: This article is intended as a summary only. Each case is different so if a problem does arise for you, seek legal advice tailored to your own circumstances. This article cannot be relied on as a substitute for legal advice.

Acknowledgements: The writer wishes to thank Darren Gansberg, Linda Xie and Nicholas McConnell for their feedback on this article.

15 *Copyright Act 1968 (Cth), s 126B.*

16 *At the time of writing, Facebook's policy was that a user retains ownership of the copyright in the work they upload to Facebook, however, they grant Facebook a non-exclusive, transferable, sub-licensable, royalty free, worldwide licence to use that copyright protected work. See: Clause 2, Statement of Rights and Responsibilities (https://www.facebook.com/legal/terms). However, the term can change in a minute so check for yourself if it is important to you.*

children's books

MARC MARTIN
ERICA WAGNER
TRACIE GRIMWOOD
JOANNA LAKE
SHANE MCGOWAN
MITCH VANE
NATALIE MARSHALL
ESSAY BY SHAUN TAN

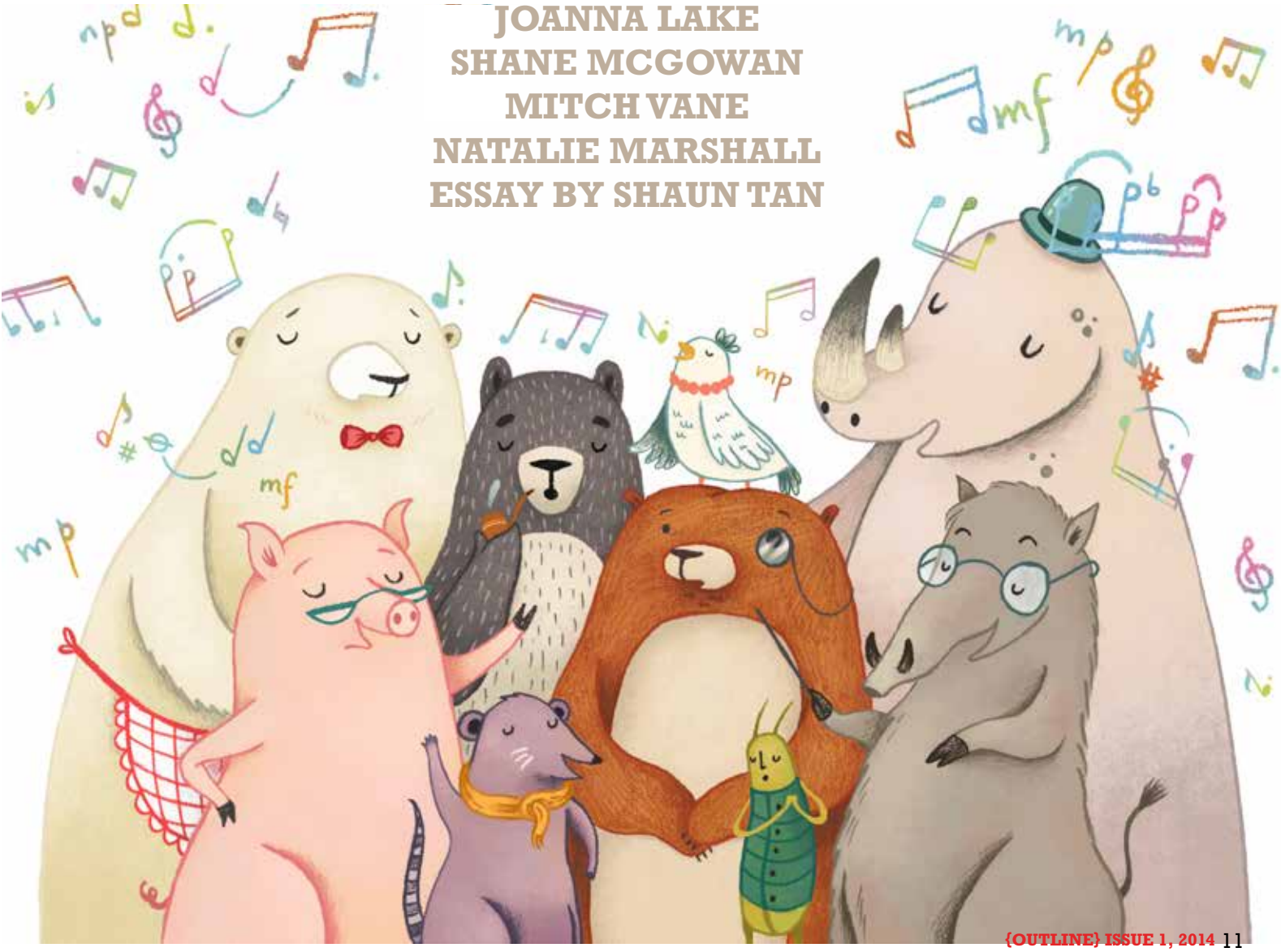

Image by Laura Wood. http://www.laurawoodillustration.com

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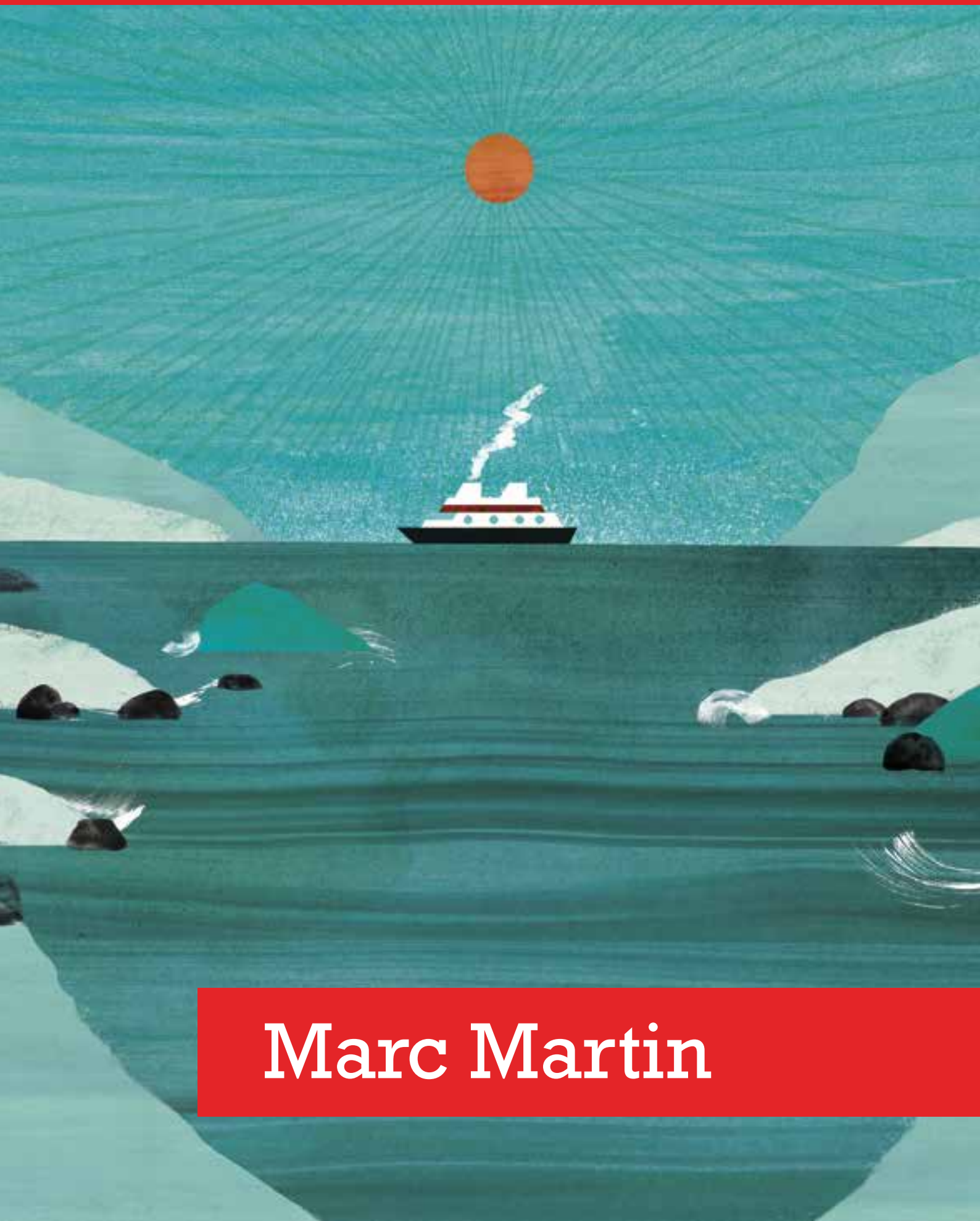


Marc Martin

Marc Martin

In my interviews over the past year I've noticed that some of the most striking illustration work comes from former graphic designers - Marc is another that falls into this category. Marc manages to balance design and colour so beautifully with a combination of computer and hand-drawn techniques. His work has gained the attention of publishers in the last few years, and Marc kindly shares his history and technique with Outline.

Outline: We would love a brief overview of your life from France to Australia, graphic design to illustration.

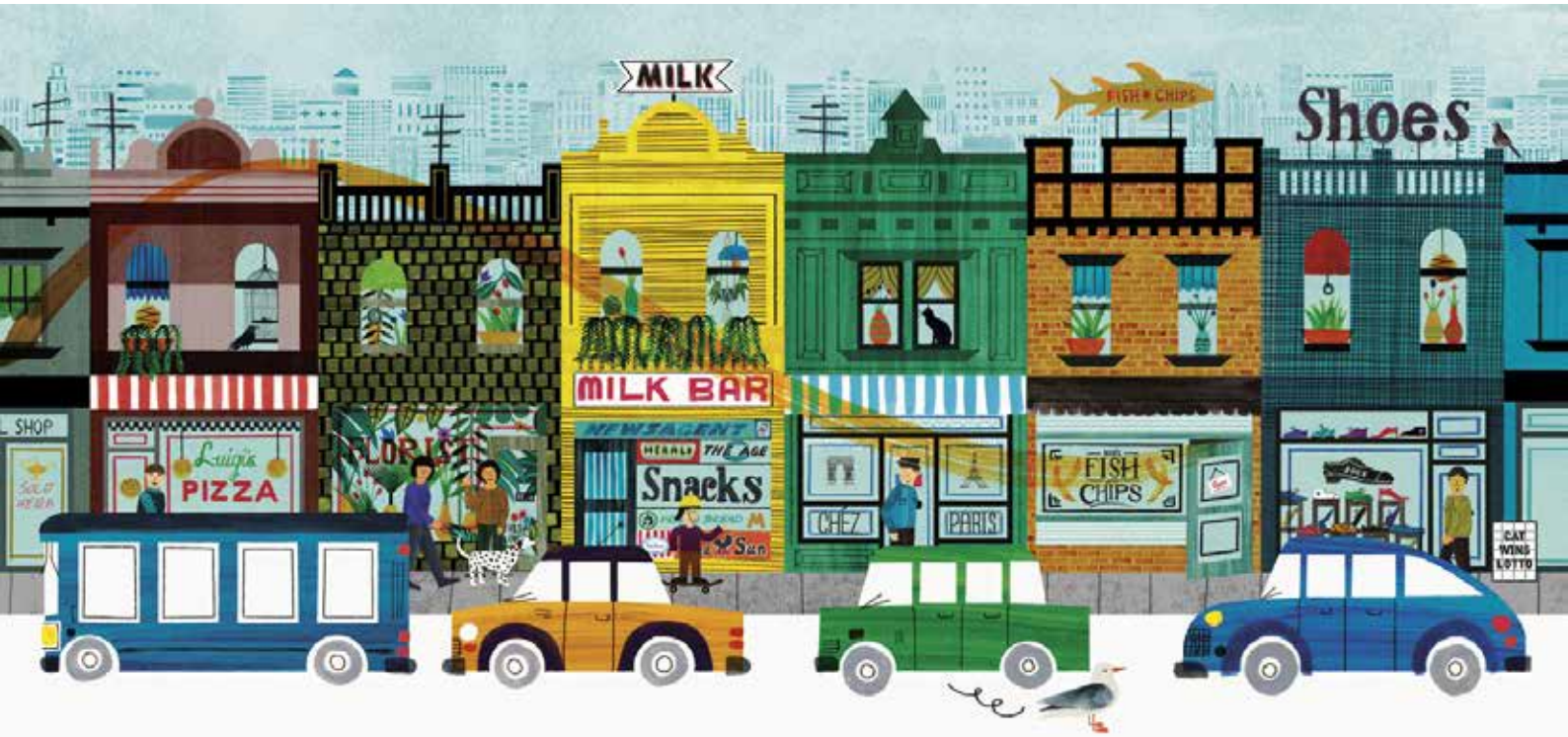
Marc: I was born in France but moved to Australia with my mother when I was about 5 years old. I briefly lived in Paris in my early twenties, but for the most part Melbourne has been my home.

I originally studied graphic design at RMIT, and that training has definitely influenced my illustration work – I'm continually battling between the learned restraint of design, and the creative freedom that illustration allows. It's only been in the last couple of years that I've transitioned from being a 'graphic designer', to a full-time illustrator. I think I always knew that I didn't want to work in the graphic design industry, so in the periods between graduating from university and being a full-time illustrator, I've also studied sculpture, social sciences and furniture making. I'm always open to new ideas and new possibilities!

Outline: It was great to hear that your book *A Forest* was first self-published, and then picked up by Penguin. Was this your first publishing deal? Would you recommend the process of self-publishing for other illustrators looking to work in the children's book industry?

Marc: Yes, *A Forest* was my first publishing deal. When I first self-published *A Forest* in 2008, I didn't have much of a plan on where I wanted it to go. At the time I just thought of it as a creative outlet for myself - a way of making something beautiful and hopefully sharing it with other people. It was a personal experiment in self-publishing - to make a book and see where it would go, without putting any pressure on myself of having to sell a product.

In that sense, I guess I took the approach most artists would take when making something; make the work for the works sake; and if people happen to like it (or buy it), then that's a bonus. The thought of approaching a major publisher with the initial idea never crossed my mind – it was more a case of having an idea and wanting to do it as soon as possible (I can be a pretty impatient person!) – so



for me that meant self-publishing as a starting point. It was pure luck that Penguin happened to see the book, and like it! So, from my experience, I'd definitely recommend having a go at self-publishing – you never know where it may lead.

Outline: I've spied watercolours, digital, pencil works and more... Do you have a preferred medium? Do you follow a similar process irregardless of the medium?

Marc: My process is pretty similar regardless of the project. I always start by doing some simple pencil sketches to nut out the idea in my head. Once I've got a concept down on paper as a sketch, I can pretty much imagine what it's going to look like in my head – so it's just about bringing that idea to life. I'll usually have an idea of the medium I want to use before I start on the artwork, but I like to experiment with different mediums as well. I often find that the tests and 'mistakes' I make whilst experimenting can later develop and inform the finished artwork, so it's good to try things out and be open to new ways of working.

Outline: How do you balance your other illustration work - such as editorial and advertising - against children's book illustration? Do you have a preference for working in a certain area?

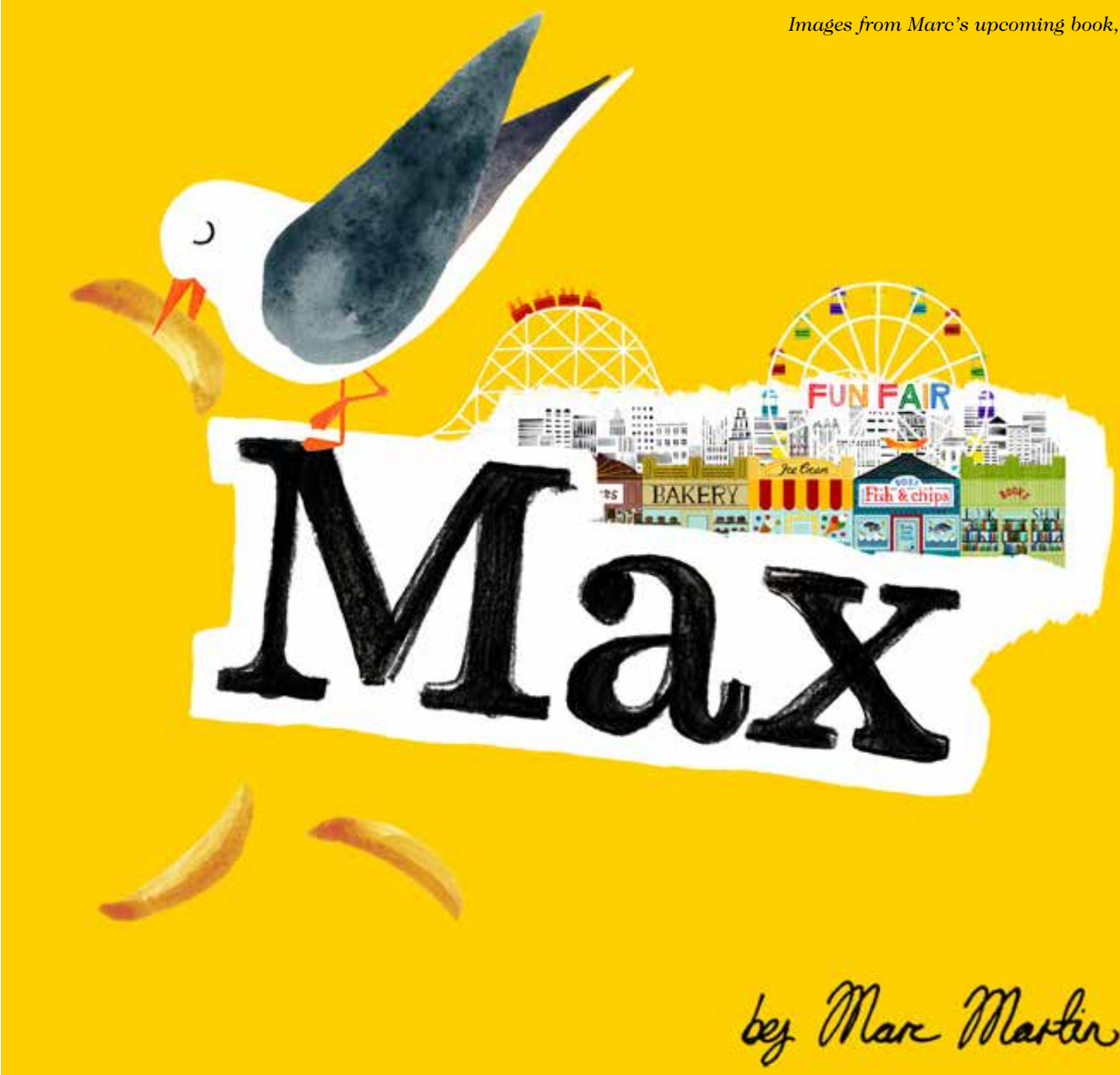
Marc: I'm always working on several projects at once, so there's a constant balancing of different types of work going on. I wouldn't say I have a particular preference for any of these. I really enjoy working in different disciplines, it keeps things interesting – one day it might be a mural for a bookshop or hospital, the next an editorial illustration for a magazine. I'm open to all kinds of projects.

Outline: We'd love to hear of the children book illustrators that inspire/influence you.

Marc: I'm influenced and inspired by so many things! In terms of picture books, I'm finding myself being more and more influenced by illustrators from the 50s and 60s. People like Bruno Munari, Charley Harper and Saul Bass did some amazing things that still resonate in design and illustration today, and I'm strongly influenced by that modernist aesthetic and philosophy. Other people I admire are M. Sasek, Jenny Baker, Dahlov Ipcar, Jon Klassen, Jon McNaught, and Tomi Ungerer to name a few.

Outline: Can you share any 2014 projects you are excited about?

Images from Marc's upcoming book, Max



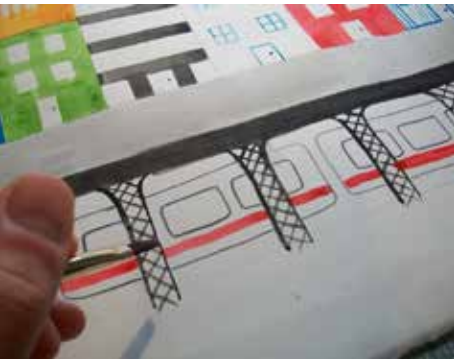
Marc: My next picture book, *Max* is due to be released in April this year, so I'm really excited about that. It's about a seagull called Max, who has a particular fondness for fish-and-chips, and his friendship with Bob, the fish-and-chip shop owner. I guess you could say that it's a story of enduring friendship.

I'm also working on another book due to be released early next year, as well as a couple of digital projects for tablet devices, one commissioned by Penguin Books, and another self-initiated. And maybe a couple of other things if I can fit them in!

{CLICK!} Marc Martin

Website http://www.marcmartin.com

Facebook https://www.facebook.com/IllustrationByMarcMartin



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Outline: Your digital work has a "natural textural" quality to it - could you share with us your process for creating a digital work?

Marc: I recently worked on a project for Penguin books called *Sharing Stories*. Whilst this piece is primarily hand drawn, I also used the computer to adjust colours and add more elements. You can see how it developed from an original water-colour drawing into a more complex, layered digital piece.

I originally did a very rough sketch in my notebook before I started, and then a more detailed, full-sized sketch. (left top).

I then started colouring in the buildings with watercolour paints. (left).

And then I added some detail with coloured pencil before scanning in the picture. (left, bottom).

Once it's on the computer it's easy to adjust things like colour, or mask certain areas to add more texture and detail.

Sometimes I add detail by using a light box to trace certain areas.

And below, the finished piece!

Erica Wagner

Above: Erica's artwork, "Dancers 1". Following page - La Mama poster by Erica.

Erica Wagner

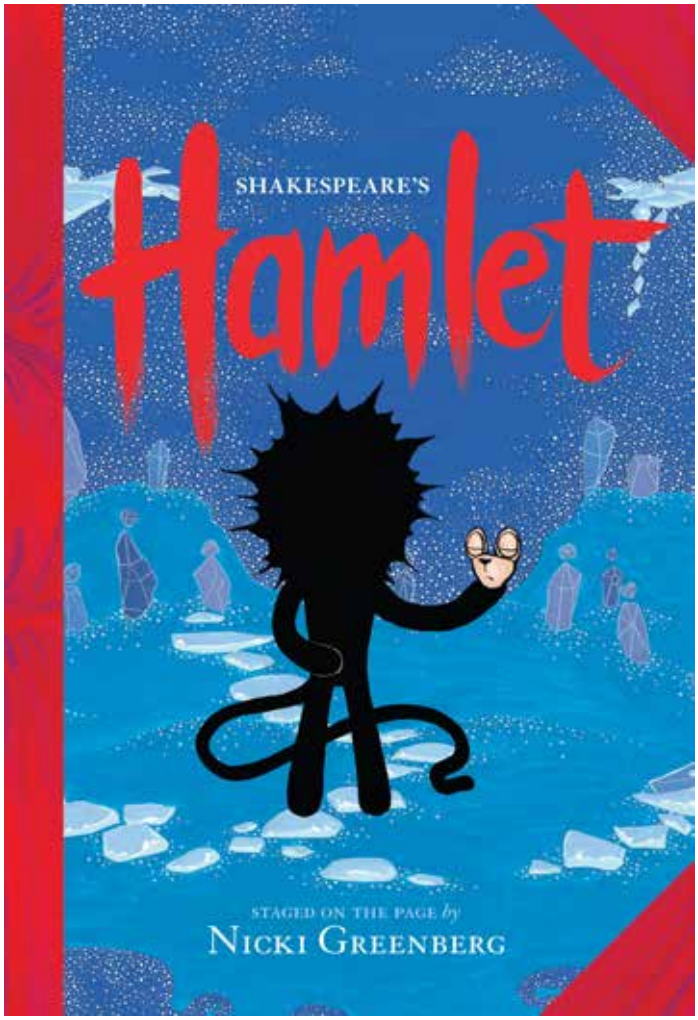
Current children's book publisher at Allen and Unwin, Erica Wagner is also an artist. Erica kindly shares her incredible path to her current role, giving a great insight into the world of publishing, the changes it has gone through, and her plans for the future.

Outline: We would love to learn about your career path, including your time spent at the Beatrice Davis Editorial Fellowship. What drew you to publishing, and in particular children's books?

Erica: My first job in the book trade was crushing boxes at Thesaurus Bookshop in Church Street Brighton. The owner, Luke McCartney, was a friend of my brother's, and mentioned that he needed a bit of help in the lead-up to Christmas. I was a fifteen-year-old introvert but a voracious reader, so it was the perfect job. As well as crushing boxes, I helped out in the shop, unpacking boxes, dusting shelves, serving customers. It was the ideal training ground for someone who loved books and reading. I was exposed to books and authors I would never have heard of otherwise, and I experienced firsthand how people choose books, and how influential hand-selling can be – a common experience was harried parents rushing in on Saturday mornings saying, 'Help! I need books for an advanced five-year-old, an eight-year-old who hates reading and a twelve-year-old who loves horses, right now!'

When I finished school, my best subjects were English, Literature and Art. I was direction-less though and didn't have a strong sense of what I wanted to do or be. I wanted to write, I wanted to paint, I wanted a different kind of life to how I had been raised – I was hungry for experience. I applied for the College of the Arts and didn't get in, so started an Arts degree at Melbourne Uni instead. But after the first year I deferred and focused on saving enough money to travel overseas. As well as working in the bookshop, I worked in the kitchen at a nursing home, picked grapes in Mildura, and finally departed for a three-month trip to Europe. That trip changed the course of my life as, at the end of the trip, I fell in love at first sight with a 41-year-old poet in Cornwall and when I returned, he followed me to Australia. We headed up the coast ended up working on a tomato farm in Bowen in North Queensland for six months. There we got married and by the time we left at the end of the season, I was pregnant with our son. The fated feeling we both had about our relationship pulled us together, and back in Melbourne we led a financially poor but artistically rich life, forging friendships in the underground poetry and writing scene. In 1985 my husband started La Mama Poetica with Mal Morgan, I designed the poster and added the poets' names by hand every month and around the time our daughter was born, I illustrated Kristin Henry's book of poems *Slices of Wry*. My husband eventually found more regular work in Community Arts and I started working again at the bookshop, gradually becoming the buyer for the children's section.

It was during these years – the mid-late1980s, that I had an epiphany: I wanted to work with books but not with the public - I wanted to be an editor! But I had no idea what editors actually did and how I could become one, a young mother of two, having dropped out of uni. So I wrote to Penguin Books and asked, 'What do you have to do to become an editor?' I received the most wonderful letter from Bruce Sims, the publisher of adult books. Instead of saying that I needed a Masters in Literature he said, 'Try and get any job you can in the publishing industry and work your way up'. This advice was gold to me, and encouraged me to apply for a job as a trainee book editor in the newly formed children's department at Penguin Books when it was advertised in the Weekly Book Newsletter. My husband typed the application (as I didn't know how) and I wasn't surprised when I received the answer, that my application had been unsuccessful ...



Months passed and one day the phone rang. I was wrangling our two young children and answered the phone somewhat gruffly – but my tone changed instantly when I realised I was talking to Julie Watts, the children's book publisher at Penguin. She asked if I was still interested in the job and could I come out to the offices in Ringwood for a chat.

This was July 1988 and I was twenty-five. I tell this story in such a long-winded way to encourage anyone reading this to realise the role serendipity plays in the way our lives unfold. Without Julie's intuition, I would never have had the chance to work in this industry that has given me so much.

Those early years at Penguin were terribly exciting. It was a time of growth, a golden era in the world of Australian children's book publishing with a fantastic crop of talented writers and illustrators starting their careers and being published. We were a small editorial team: Julie, Jane Godwin (writer and current publisher of children's books at Penguin/Random) and myself, and we discussed everything together, laughing and crying a lot along the way. I was incredibly fortunate to have fantastic mentors, including Kay Ronai, Isobelle Carmody's editor at the time, who I was able to 'shadow' as she worked on *The Farseekers*, the second book in the *Obernewtyn Chronicles*. It is impossible to list all the authors and books I worked on in my ten years at Penguin, but a small selection includes Melina Marchetta's *Looking for Alibrandi,* Isobelle Carmody's *The Gathering,* Leigh Hobbs' *Old Tom* series, the puzzle books *Spooner or Later, Duck for Cover* and *Freeze a Crowd* by Paul Jennings, Ted Greenwood and Terry Denton, Sonya Hartnett's *Sleeping Dogs,* Maureen McCarthy's *Cross My Heart* and *Queen Kat, Carmel and St Jude Get a Life,* David Metzenthen's *Johnny Hart's Heroes,* Caroline Macdonald's *Speaking to Miranda* and *Spider Mansion,* Judith Clarke's *The Lost Day* and Boori Monty Pryor and Meme McDonald's *Maybe Tomorrow.* I learnt so much from each and everyone one of them and from all the other amazing writers and illustrators of that time.

At the end of 1998, after a few years of turmoil, which included the end of my marriage, it was time for change. I left Penguin to start up a children's list with the small publisher Duffy & Snellgrove. This was tremendously exciting and I named the new list *Silverfish.* That same year I was awarded the Beatrice Davis Editorial Fellowship and in 1999 I travelled to my first-ever book Bologna Book Fair, before taking up the Fellowship with Front Street Books in North Carolina and then St Martin's Press and Greenwillow in New York.

This international exposure was exactly what I needed at that time. It was a humbling time too as I realised that I'd perhaps over-estimated my capabilities. Moving from being an associate publisher in a huge multi-national company, with many colleagues and solid infrastructures, to doing everything myself in a tiny independent set-up required a shift in thinking that was a bit of a shock for me! My time with Front Street was a tremendous learning curve.

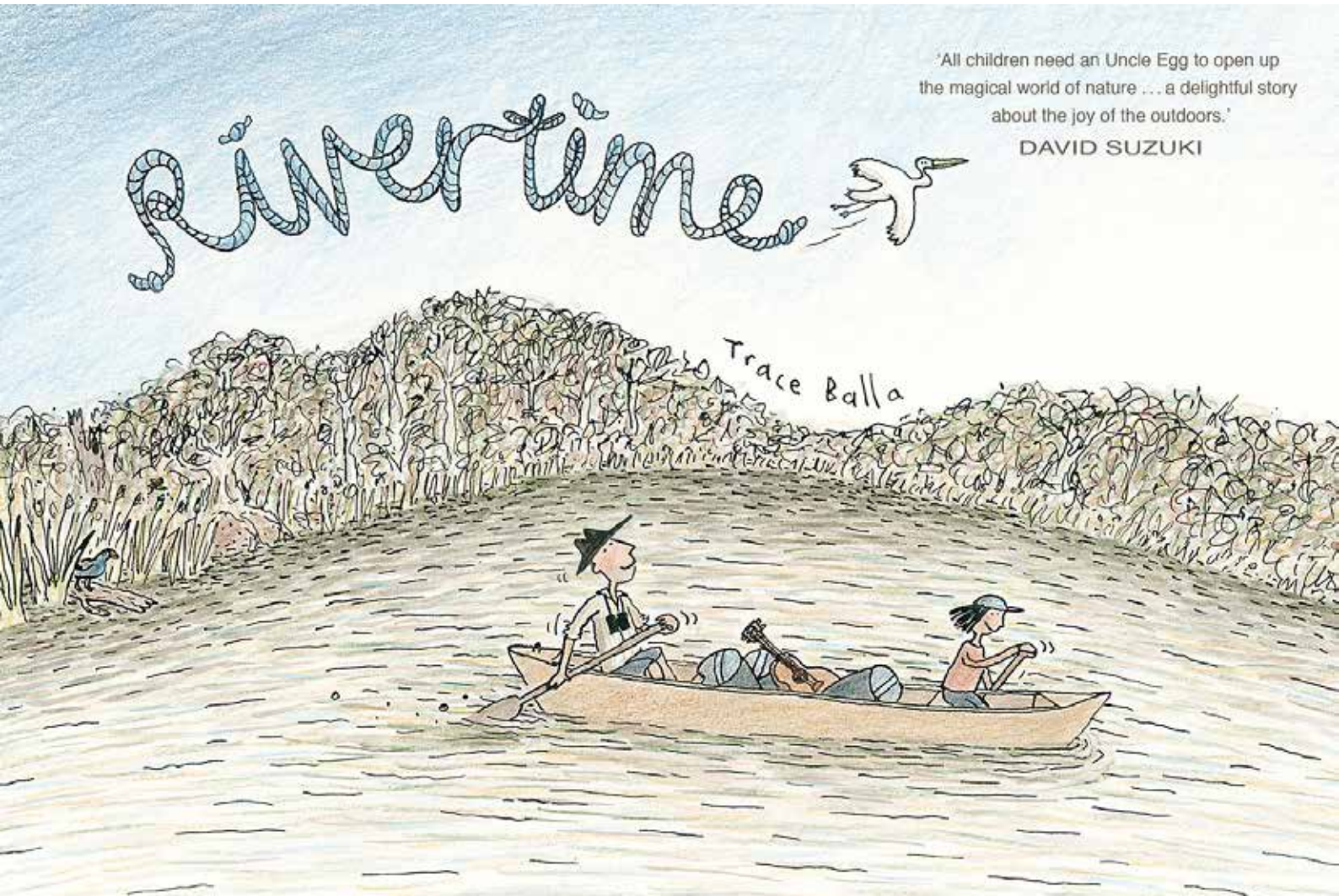
Above and following - Allen and Unwin picture book titles.

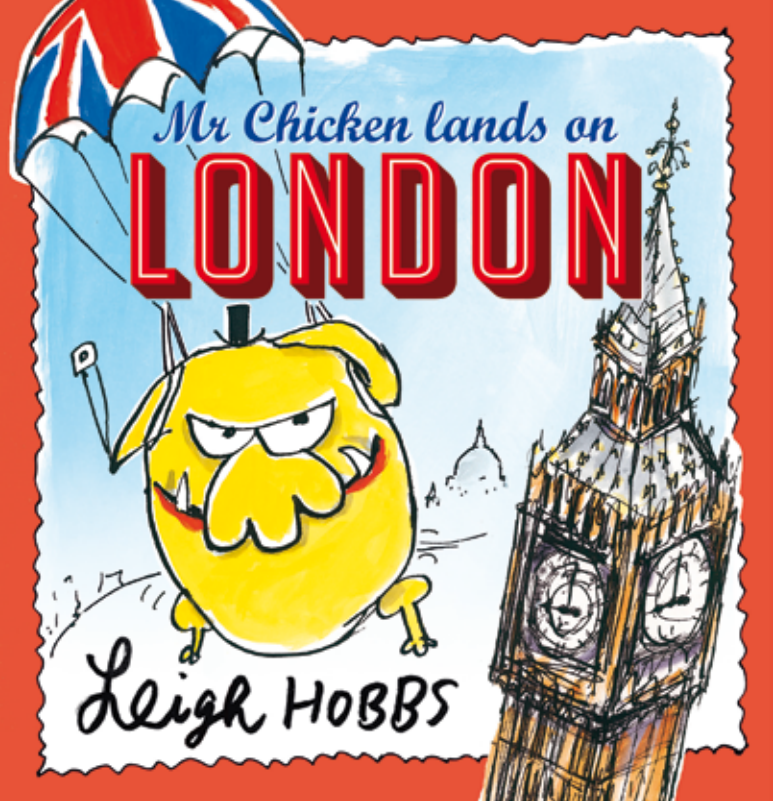
Stephen Roxburgh had previously been Publisher at Farrar Strauss and Giroux, working with Madeline L'Engle and Roald Dahl, and with a fearsome editorial reputation. He taught me so much and helped me understand what I needed to do to reinvent myself as a small publisher. But in the end that wasn't enough to save Silverfish – after just one year and the publication of five books, including Terry Denton's brilliant *Storymaze* and the Book of the Year winner, *Wolf on the Fold* by Judith Clarke, it became clear that Silverfish could not continue in its present guise – the imperatives of cash flow are everything for small businesses. So it was time for me to look for someone who would adopt the Silverfish books and me ... My saviours turned out to be Rosalind Price and Patrick Gallagher from Allen & Unwin, who were keen to talk, to acquire the books I'd published and to give me another chance.

So on Valentine's Day in 2000, I started at Allen & Unwin. My initial brief was to publish 12-15 books a year to add to Rosalind's list of about 25 books a year. In 2005 that list had grown to about 50 books a year and now we are up around 85-90. My personal list of books per year is currently about 24-28. Structurally Allen & Unwin is very different to the generally hierarchical structure of other Australian houses, and is most similar to some of the bigger American companies I observed on the Fellowship. To manage the list after this period of growth, we now have Liz Bray as our Children's Books Director overseeing the whole operation and three publishers, Eva Mills, Anna McFarlane and myself; four commissioning editors, Sarah Brenan, Jodie Webster, Sue Flockhart and Susannah Chambers (currently in New York on the Beatrice Davis Fellowship: http://www.susannahandbeatrice.com); a Senior Editor, Elise Jones and a team of three editors and three admin staff who work on the books with the publishers and commissioning editors. All of us are very hands-on, involved in every aspect of the making of our books and there is a wonderful collegiate quality to the way we work with each other and with our authors and illustrators.

These last fourteen years at A&U have been incredibly exciting and for me personally have seen a development in the number of illustrator/artist-led projects, including graphic novels. Observing the working patterns of my partner of fifteen years, illustrator Craig Smith, who has illustrated over 380 books in his 30-year career, has given my a very direct insight into the life as an illustrator. Leigh Hobbs, creator of *Old Tom, Horrible Harriet, Mr Badger* and *Mr Chicken,* has taught me so much about the art of picture books and how to create books that start with pictures rather than words. Together we've learnt to trust the creative process, to keep pushing until it all clicks into place, to stay true to the heart of a project, to attend to all the little details that make a book sing ...

This method has served so many people well including the late, great Gregory Rogers, whose wordless masterpieces





Upcoming title published by Allen & Unwin.

The Boy The Bear The Baron The Bard, Midsummer Knight and the 2010 CBCA Book of the Year Award winner, *The Hero of Little Street* were all developed in this way: starting with an iconic picture, that might need to ferment for a couple of years, playing with pictures and story ideas, developing and understanding the characters, story-boarding, doing roughs, revising roughs, playing some more, letting it sit, and then finally pulling it all together.

So, as well as continuing to work with writers on works of fiction and non-fiction for children and young adults, I've been working on many illustrated books over the last decade, including a number of graphic novels as well as picture books. While the more traditional method of creating picture book – responding to a brilliant text first and then finding an illustrator to develop the pictures – still has its place, I've found it liberating working the other way round – letting the pictures lead the way. And of course graphic novels in which the text and pictures develop simultaneously have a magic all of their own ...

Publishing books with Indigenous authors and themes has also been a big part of my time at Allen & Unwin. Stand-out books include the *Papunya School Books of Country and History,* Mary Malbunka's *When I was little Like You,* John Danalis's *Riding the Black Cockatoo* and the Prime Minister's Literary Awardwinner, *Shake a Leg* by Boori Monty Pryor and Jan Ormerod. In the last couple of years, Allen & Unwin has partnered with the Little Big Book Club in South Australia on the Emerging Indigenous Mentorship Program. Working closely with mentors including Ann James, Nadia Wheatley, Ken Searle, Nick Bland and Bronwyn Bancroft, six new Indigenous writers and illustrators have created four books for young children. All four books will be released this year.

Outline: We would love to hear about one or two stand out children's book projects you have worked on in your career. When first seeing the manuscript or illustrations did you know you had something special?

Erica: Over the years, I've learned to really trust my instincts. These make themselves felt in quite a physical way. I genuinely do get shivers up my spine when something is so good that I simply must publish it. I had the shiver reaction when Nicki Greenberg showed me the first 100 pages of her graphic adaptation of *The Great Gatsby*, even though it took a few years to work out how to publish it; I had it again when she showed me the first ink splash drawings for *Hamlet*. I had it with Trace Balla's brilliant *Rivertime,* to be published in April this year. I had it with Tohby Riddle's *Unforgotten* and Neil Curtis's *The Memory Book*. Some of the books I've felt this way about have gone on to be bestsellers, some have faded away. The book market is fickle – timing is everything. Sometimes books are overlooked for no apparent reason, sometimes people are simply ahead of their time. But even then I've never regretted backing that feeling.

Outline: Apart from the ability to draw well(!), what in your opinion makes a great children's book illustrator?

Erica: To be a good children's book illustrator, you have to be in touch with your inner child. You have to have a sense of fun as well as acute emotional recall of what it is like to be a child (without rose-coloured glasses ...). You need to love stories and have a curious and adventurous mind and a spirit of generosity.

Outline: For any illustrators looking to submit their portfolio, can you share any advice?

Erica: In approaching children's book publishers, try and show a variety of work, in colour and black and white, showing children and animals in action and from various view points. Be yourself and be persistent! Being flexible, good with deadlines and easy to work with is a strong advantage.

Outline: Over your publishing career, the market has changed so dramatically, particularly recently. How have you navigated these changes? What changes are you excited about?

Erica: The market has changed significantly since 2008. The retail environment has shrunk, online sales have increased, and we've seen – in the adult market – the rise of ebooks. In the area for which I'm directly responsible – books for children and young adults, ebooks are not as significant a factor, but there are exciting digital developments that I am personally very interested in. With four grandchildren I am again closely in touch with young children and can see the magnetic power of the tablet.

Thankfully though for our industry I think the printed book

"Dimond Gorge" by Erica Wagner.

is still a long way from dead and illustrated books still have a strong market presence in print form. It is true though that the market is extremely competitive. On the other hand the opportunities for writers and illustrators to self-publish and promote their own work is much greater than its ever been. Publishers too are engaging more directly with consumers and I think this is a good thing, as in the end we all need help to find the right books at the right time and navigate the vast choices that are now available.

Outline: I've read about your commitment and interest in graphic novels in the media, such as *Meanjin*. Could you share with us what defines a graphic novel, and what in your opinion makes a good one?

Erica: I absolutely love the form and we remain committed to publishing a small number (about three a year) of graphic novels by local creators. We have found though that we are best at selling graphic novels that have a clear market for children and teenagers and that ones that are pitched to a general audience are trickier for us.

A good graphic novel has the same definition as any good book – the story must be well told (in words and pictures), have well developed and interesting characters, an engaging and unpredictable storyline, something strong to say and the 'x' factor – that indefinable 'something' which makes you love it.

Outline: Have you always created art? How do you balance your work as an artist with your publishing role - and do you find one influences the other?

Erica: My art life has ticked along quietly alongside my publishing life. It was hard to find time when my children were young, but when they were older I started to do classes again with artists and that kept me going until I could rejig my life so that I now work three days a week at publishing and have more time to spend in the studio. It has been difficult to find clear patches of time, especially at certain times of the year when the publishing life takes over due to relentless deadlines, but generally it works pretty well. I have all the same creative self-doubts that plague the writers and illustrators I work with, so I think it has made me more empathetic with their struggles!

Outline: Could you share with us how you create your work - inspiration, environment, materials, process?

Erica: I go to life drawing classes religiously with Yvonne Audette at the Hawthorn Artists Society. The sessions are all short poses, which stops you getting attached to the outcome. Drawing from a life model feeds my painting in a way that nothing else can. There is something so direct and intimate about trying to capture movement and humanity in a few charcoal strokes.

I also love painting outside in the landscape. Trying to capture the feeling of a place, trying to observe the shapes and colours and translate them into paint ... frustrating at times, but blissful too!

I also like to just play with shapes and colours and see if an image evolves. One of my favourite techniques is collage - I just love ripping up old drawings and paintings, magazines, and bits of writing, pasting and painting and creating an image that way.

I think I'm probably most influenced by the German expressionists, with their direct, forceful and expressive use of colour, line and shape but I know I have a very long way to go in my artistic life. I'm enjoying the journey though!

Outline: Are there any upcoming shows you are involved with in 2014?

Erica: I exhibit regularly with the Victorian Artists Society and the Contemporary Artists Society and my work is also represented by Port Art and Cambridge Studio Gallery. I'm hoping to build up to another solo show in the next couple of years. **O**

{CLICK!} Erica Wagner

Website http://www.ericawagner.com.au

A & U: https://www.allenandunwin.com/

Tracie Grimwood

{PROFILE}

Tracie Grimwood

Tracie's work reminds me of fairytale worlds, with dreamy, layered artworks. Along with children's books, Tracie's work lends itself to a variety of mediums and industries and she generously shares her work and process here with Outline.

Outline: We'd love to hear of your illustration career - studies, "breaks" into the industry, highlights and lowlights!

Tracie: I studied Graphic design at Swinburne University back in the late 80s/early 90s. The lecturers were quite supportive of any students who wanted to specialise in certain areas and I was able graduatewith a competent illustration folio. I had been freelancing since my second year so it was a natural progression to just keep freelancing.

My first big break was to rent a studio with fellow graduate, Michelle Katsouranis, at the Clyde Street Studios in St. Kilda, where we found a wonderful friend and mentor in Ned Culic. He was incredibly helpful and encouraged us to join IA and take a page out in *The Book*. That was when the work really started to come in and, before I knew it, I was a full time illustrator.

Any day that I get to work on a nice project with a decent budget is a highlight! I've also made some great friends over the years and I love the flexibility of freelancing. I can't say I have had too many lowlights; I've been asked to sign quite a few contracts that have been so unfair they're laughable and I did have one publishing project where the rough approval process became so long and convoluted that there was no time left to produce the final illustrations. It's the only time I have ever had to walk away from a job and it didn't feel good. Then, of course, a few years' back the whole illustration industry seem to change and I went from knocking back work to not having enough. In hindsight this has been a positive though, because I've expanded my business to include a whole lot of things that I've never had the time to do before.

Outline: What is an average day in the studio for you?

Tracie: One of my other passions is dressage so, most mornings, I drive out early to where I keep my horse Tilly then, once I'm back in the studio, I check emails, Facebook etc..and skim through my blogroll. If I have any print orders to fill I see to those and then I spend the rest of the day working on the current project. If I don't have an illustration assignment I work on my own paintings, do some research or work on my online shops and social media.

We recently acquired a little rescue dog named Roy, who is great company, but by 6.30 he's demanding his walk. If everything is under control I'll call it a day otherwise I'll do a few more hours in the evening.

I like to leave things like mounting prints and preparing painting surfaces for the weekend, when I can spread out and take my time.

Outline: We'd love to hear about your work in the children's book world. How did you get your first publishing deal, and what projects are you currently working on?

Tracie: In my second year at Swinburne, a fellow student and I answered an ad put up in the design department by a small local publisher. We pooled our folios (not having much of worth to show at that stage) and went for an interview where, to our surprise, we were were given a picture book on the spot to illustrate together. I ended up doing quite a lot of work for them, which paid for my course and allowed me to start freelancing full time.

I've only just finished illustrating six picture books back to back, so I'm happy to be having a little break from books at the moment. Having said that, I've also been working on some character sketches for a book project I'm collaborating on.

Outline: What do you think makes a good children's book illustrator? Who are your art heroes?

Tracie: Aside from technical skill, I think a really good children's book illustrator needs to have a great deal of empathy and, by extension, the ability to anthropomorphise, as well as a sense of humour. They need to feel what the characters feel to be able to show the appropriate expression and gesture and convey the text in a way that the reader can relate to, not just how an adult thinks they might. This is why I admire illustrators like Charlotte Voake. Her line work is spare and loose to the point of carelessness yet it is so full of expression and character. She can summon a whole range of emotions with just a few words and some scratchy lines. I think it goes without saying that they must also love books themselves and have a feel for language; to just literally interpret the text isn't enough; they must be able to reach the heart of the story.

I have so many art heroes it's impossible to list them all but some of my current favourite book illustrators are Jon Klassen, Calef Brown, Carson Ellis, Lisbeth Zwerger, Aurelia Fronty, Giselle Potter, Isabelle Arsenault, Katherine Dunne and Oliver Jeffers.

Outline: You have a few illustration sales streams - such as Etsy, Red Bubble, picture books, markets, exhibitions and commissions. How do you market to these different audiences, and what do you find the most successful/ enjoyable?

Tracie: I've always taken out pages in the IA Book and I periodically make submissions to publishers. I haven't done too much marketing of my prints and cards, partly because I've been very busy with illustration work and haven't made much new work of my own for a while, however I have a lot of new pieces planned for this year and will be putting myself out there a bit more. I've dipped my toe into the market scene but I'm not quite sure if it's my thing. I have all of my prints made at Acme et Al in Yarra Glen and I sell quite a lot through the print gallery there and I think that suits me better.

I market my horse themed paintings and prints fairly directly to the equestrian community via word of mouth, equine art societies, forums etc... I also support a horse charity called Quest Equine Welfare by providing them with artwork for merchandise and this has been a mutually beneficial arrangement.

I actually find my Facebook Page and blog to be one of the easiest and most successful ways to reach my audience and one I haven't made nearly enough use of.

Outline: What upcoming projects are you excited about?

Tracie: The main one that I'm super excited about is my first solo exhibition of paintings that I'm holding at Wyreena Gallery in July. I'm also working with an author on some book submissions, which are a lot of fun and, later in the year, I'm planning to produce a picture book that I've written as an ebook and app, with my partner doing the sound design and my best mate doing the animation. I'm really looking forward to the collaborative side of this project, as I spend so much time working on my own. I also have a little film project on the back burner. One of my friends is a documentary film maker and we've done a bit of playing around with some stop motion animation in the manner of William Kentridge. I have a story idea that we'd like to realise into a short film so I'd love the chance to work on that, as well. And, of course, more prints and hopefully more picture books

Outline: Do you have any resources, online or off, that you can share with the IA community?

Tracie: http://www.wikipaintings.org/
http://www.google.com/culturalinstitute/home
http://www.illustrationmundo.com
http://www.brainpickings.org/
http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/
http://theopeninghours.com.au/
http://theartroomplant.blogspot.com.au/

{PROCESS}

Outline: Could you share with us your process - how you create your beautiful, dreamy painterly work?

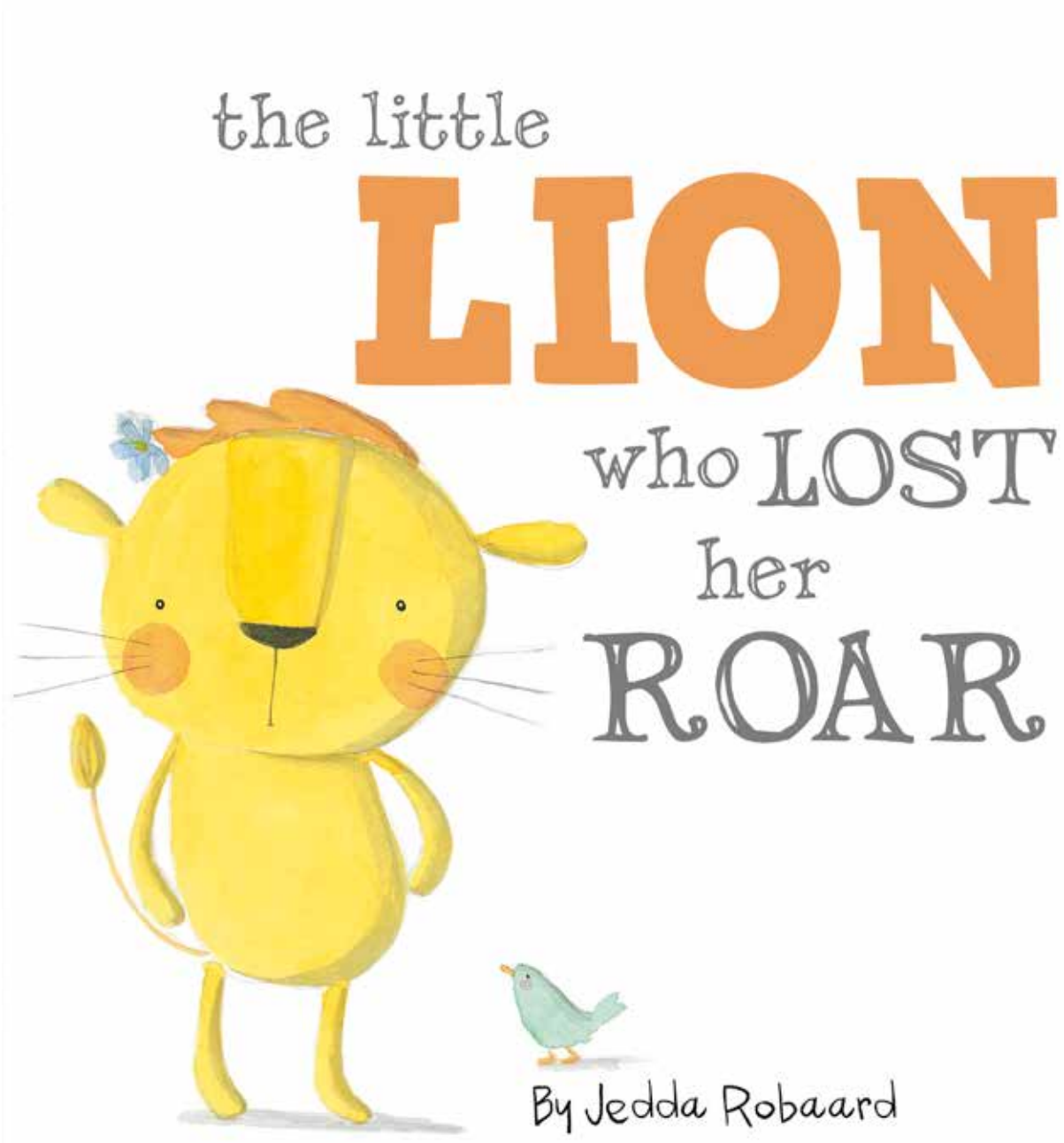
Tracie: I always work from fully resolved roughs, out of necessity, when I'm illustrating so when I get the chance to make personal work I prefer to let my paintings evolve in a more intuitive way. This helps me stay emotionally engaged and keeps the work fresh.

I keep sketchbooks full of very rough thumbnails and words and phrases that I use as springboards for ideas. I start by preparing the surface (canvas, timber panel or paper) with gesso, then I paint the background texture, building up layers of paint to create the intended mood. Then, using my very rudimentary sketches as a guide, I draw in the main elements with chalk pastel, which can be easily erased with a damp cloth. Once I'm satisfied, I take a photo with my phone so I can refer back, and then start blocking in shapes, making adjustments as I go. After that, I add all the little details.

Occasionally I'll go back and repaint a section but once I'm happy I set the painting aside to cure and then varnish it.

{CLICK!} Tracie Grimwood

Website www.traciegrimwood.com.au/
Facebook https://www.facebook.com/traciegrimwoodillustration



All images within this profile - titles published by The Five Mile Press.

{PROFILE}

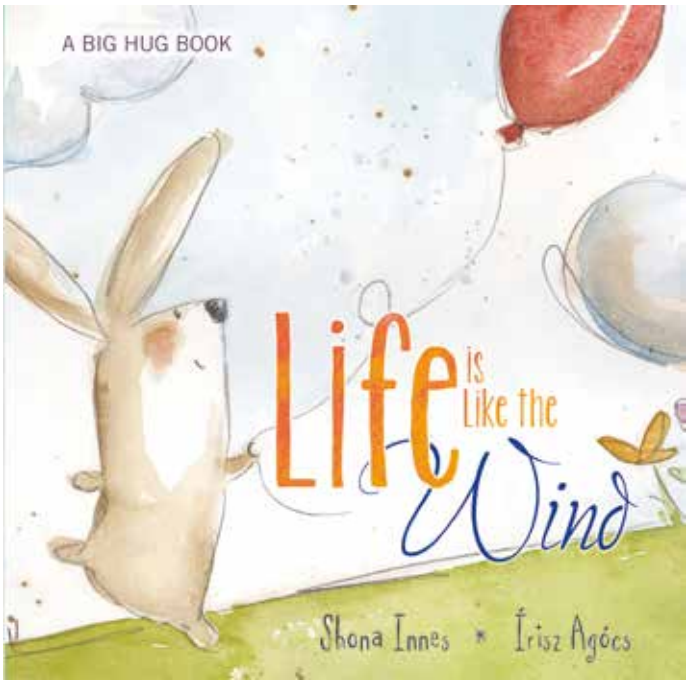
Joanna Lake

As Co-editions Manager of children's book publisher The Five Mile Press, Joanna has a great understanding of the international market for children's books. She kindly shares these insights with Outline, including a look at the international book fairs and the job of selling illustrated books abroad.

Outline: Could you tell us about your role as Co-Editions Manager for the Five Mile Press, and the shape of a "regular" working day?

Joanna: In my role as the Rights and Co-editions Manager at The Five Mile Press I work to have the titles that we create here in Melbourne published all over the world, in foreign languages. We work directly with publishers overseas, meeting with them, presenting our titles and finding the right publisher for each book. This means that we need to know about the lists of different publishers worldwide, follow what illustration styles, formats and topics work well in different countries and then make agreements to have them published.

A regular working day for me will includes lots of different things, in the morning I arrive to lots of emails from all the publishers who have been working on the other side of the world during the night! Emails will include continuing discussions and negotiations on new titles, queries on production issues for the co-edition print runs we organise, contract questions - there is always a big variety. The day will then also include meetings with different teams within our company, the publishing and editorial team where we will be discussing options for new projects, reviewing potential illustrators for titles and the list, the production team on our current projects and schedules, the sales team on deals and new opportunities.



Outline: How does your role fit within a publishing house - how do you work with the different teams (editorial, production etc)?

Joanna: I work within a team of 4 selling our books internationally, and I manage the sales of all foreign language editions. The international market is very important to The Five Mile Press and we have a focused approach to making sure our titles get as much exposure as possible overseas.

We work very closely with both our editorial and production teams within the business. When looking at new projects we look at both the local (Australia and New Zealand) markets as well as the UK, US and rest of the world. For some projects we know there is a huge appeal for our local markets and it's important that we support local focused content, but for many projects it is important that there is appeal worldwide. We produce over a huge number of books every year in foreign languages and so our production team is a huge part of making that happen.

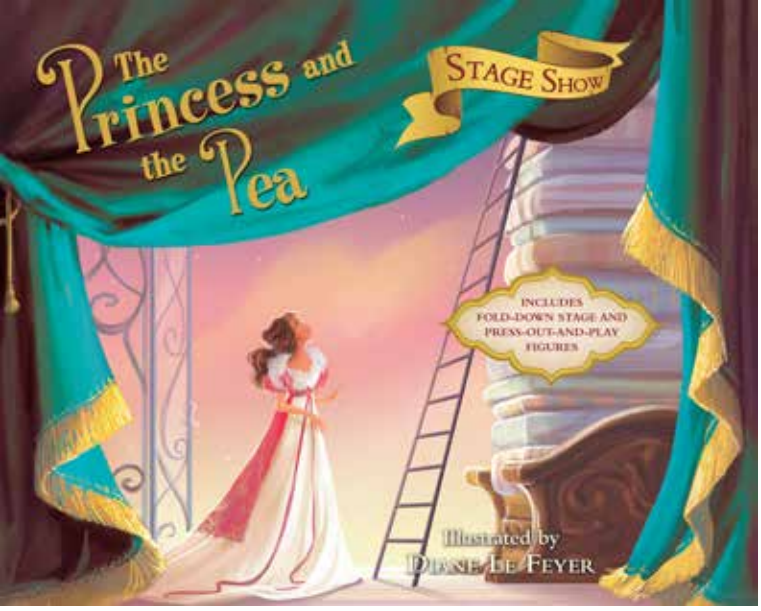
Outline: What drew you to the publishing industry, and in particular children's books?

Joanna: I have always loved books and reading, and began my career in educational publishing . I worked in the area of Primary school books and in Secondary school books and it really made me interested in creating titles that are both enjoyable and that help children learn and hopefully love books as much as I do!

Outline: We would love to hear about the book fairs - the lead up preparation, the materials, the meetings and social events.

Joanna: The book fairs are hugely important to us. It is our best opportunity to show our books to publishers from all over the world. For foreign language sales we attend two book fairs every year, the Bologna Book Fair in March and the Frankfurt Book Fair in October. Between myself and my colleague who also works selling our books in foreign languages, we would see around 100 publishers.

The Fairs work on an almost 6 month cycle, with preparation for the fair beginning pretty much the day we return from the previous one! We start by putting together the list of new titles we will be taking, looking at the materials we will take – ranging from covers, mock ups of projects and printer's mock ups – preparing sales materials and cata-



logues and organising all the meetings.

Meetings are generally half an hour long, and we will show publishers our new titles, materials and discuss when there will be opportunities to print the books.

The Fair is also a great time to catch up with other publishers, find out what is happening in publishing around the world and see lots of friends from the industry.

Outline: What do you love about the book fairs, and what do you find difficult? Could you tell us about Frankfurt vs Bologna and the differences of each?

Joanna: I love seeing all the publishers that we work with at the Fair. Because many are on the other side of the world it is the chance to see them in person, discuss new opportunities to work together and how titles that we have published with them are going. Overall the fairs are a fantastic experience and there is always a great buzz – it is difficult however not to lose your voice! With about 16 meetings a day it's tough not to be croaking your way through the last couple of meetings!

The main difference between the two fairs is that Bologna is purely a children's book fair, whereas Frankfurt covers everything that is being published for every age group. For this reason Bologna is a lot smaller than Frankfurt, which does make for a little more of a relaxed atmosphere.

Outline: I can imagine that each particular country you work with has its own likes and dislikes in terms of illustration. Could you tell us about some of the illustration styles in demand in different regions? In an international market place, what books do you aim to create - what sells well across the board?

Joanna: The Five Mile Press creates some really fantastic novelty books which are very popular with the publishers we work with, the combination of innovative formats and beautiful illustrations are part of the appeal of our list. We also create board books, many with flaps and features such as touch and feel elements, and we also have a growing picture book list. There is a lot of breadth to our list and this means we can work with many different publishers.

In terms of illustration styles, we publish a huge variety and this is an indication of the fact that there is a demand for very differing styles both here in Australia and overseas. There are some regions where a more classic style is in high demand, and others where bright colours and unique styles are being looked for.

Outline: What illustrations or books have been the best sellers in the market in general from the past few years?

Joanna: We have had some wonderfully successful series in the past few years, two that immediately come to mind are our fantastic Classic Fairytale Pop Up series and our Theatre Book Series. We have published four titles in the Classic Fairytale Pop Up series and are working on books five and six and will be showing them in Bologna next month. The combination of well-known stories and lovely illustrations has been working well across a number of key markets overseas.

The Theatre Book series is a great interactive format that has a fold-out stage and press out character pieces so that you can 'act out' the story.

Outline: What are your personal favourite illustrators?

Joanna: Oliver Jeffers, Shaun Tan, Jon Klassen (illustrator of *I Want My Hat Back*), Jedda Robaard and I really like Neil Curtis' illustrations in *Cat and Fish* as they are quite unexpected in a children's book but work so perfectly with the story.

Outline: Are there any upcoming projects you are working on that you are excited about?

Joanna: I'm really excited about a new picture book series that we have which aims to help adults tackle difficult subjects with children. The books are written by Shona Innes, a child psychologist, and illustrated by Írisz Agócs. We are about to publish the first two titles *Life is Like the Wind* and friendship is *Like a Seesaw* and have two further titles being worked on.

We also have some lovely new lift the flap books illustrated by Gabriel Evans, a young illustrator from Perth, his drawings are very sweet and so detailed. We also have a growing list of titles illustrated by Jedda Robaard, we have two new titles in our Bologna list from Jedda and they are fantastic! It's wonderful to be working with such talented Australian illustrators.

{CLICK!} The Five Mile Press

Website http://www.fivemile.com.au

Shane McGowan

Shane McGowan

Shane McGowan has worked across editorial, design, advertising and more but here we delve deeper into his work for children's books. He explains his love for this artform, "picture book illustration can help to fire kids' imagination and release their inner madness and allow them to dream and wonder. Illustrators and authors implant characters in childrens' brains that may stay with them their whole lives and help shape the kind of person they become. Can't get much cooler than that."

Outline: We'd love to hear about your career path and highlights so far. How did your first children's book contract come about?

Shane: I was living in London and had been working primarily in the editorial field for quite some time. The work was fast paced and constant and always interesting but after awhile I felt a little jaded and wanted a change. I mocked up some kids' book dummies which were atrocious. Back then I didn't even realise that children's books were 32 pages long. They came to nothing of course and years went by, I shied away from illustrating for awhile and spent time painting in my studio and exhibiting, but eventually turned back to editorial work. Then I listened to Axel Scheffler speak eloquently at a seminar and was encouraged to give kids' books another go, so when my daughter was about 4 I wrote a book inspired by her reluctance to brush her hair in the morning which became *Evie's Mad Hair Day.* I sent the dummy to 4 publishers and the lovely and talented Mike Jolly at Templar rang me the next day to offer a deal. That was 2004.

Outline: You've worked with several publishing houses on your children's books. Do you find the different publishing companies quite different to work with?

Shane: People who work in the kids publishing sector are generally the most passionate people about their chosen field. Having said that I've found every publisher is unique, every editor has their own way of working. Some are more interventionist whilst others will pretty much let you get on with it. Lately I feel children's publishing has become a lot more conservative and less willing to take risks. I would love to be proven wrong on this.

Outline: It was exciting to read that one of your children's books is being turned into a cartoon series. Could you tell us about this process, and the plans for the series?

Shane: I always thought book publishing was a slow process but the pace of TV development is glacial. I've known the head animator since I was a kid. He worked for a Sunday newspaper back in the 70's and used to publish my cartoons in the kids' section when I was 11 or 12. When I returned from living in London he suggested we make a cartoon series around a few characters from my books. We have a great team working on this however... dealing with TV networks has been deeply frustrating and a challenge, that's all I can say at the moment.

Outline: Do you find a relationship develops with the characters you draw (or write about)? What is your process to "flesh out" a character and give it a personality, style and look?

Shane's process

Shane: Yes all the characters become a family whilst I'm working on the books. Last year I illustrated 6 books for MacMillan for The Legends in their own Lunchbox series. The books I was given are very funny and were written by Meredith Costain and centred on a rather self obsessed but well meaning girl called Stella who has delusions of grandeur by the truckload. Working on so many images meant that she and her friends and nemeses really came alive to me. I became quite fond of them in the end. At the beginning of a commission I read the text a number of times until I begin to picture the book. It can either happen immediately or take a number of u-turns till I find the right course. I kind of treat each book like a little film, and each spread like a scene in the film. And gradually the characters develop and take on a life of their own. Of course it's even more pronounced when I've written the characters myself, they ARE my children. But i usually don't have the visuals in mind if I'm writing the text myself, that comes later. I'll sketch out the characters a little. Work out what hairstyle they would have, how they are dressed, whether they wear glasses, have freckles, that sort of thing. That bit is a lot of fun and really helps to define the character in readers' minds. Sometimes it'll change midway through working on the book for some random reason, like a blue shirt gets lost in the predominantly blue backgrounds of the spreads so they end up with a red striped shirt.

Outline: You've spoken at the AGIdeas festival (and some other great events!). Could you share with us how you became involved with this festival, and the theme of your talk there? What is it like being a speaker at such a big event?

Shane: AGIdeas approached me to speak and initially I was reluctant. Anyone who knows me will attest to my horror at public speaking so the thought of standing in front of 2500 strangers was confronting. But I'm so glad I was asked because it was an inspiring week. There were so many amazing speakers from around the globe, some of them quite nutty and the whole thing was impeccably run by Ken Cato and his team. My talk was entitled Draw and I just tried to be honest about the profession and my experiences. I actually found it much easier to speak to such a large audience, who are mostly in the dark, compared to a small audience of 100 who are right there before you. Picture book illustration can help to fire kids' imagination and release their inner madness and allow them to dream and wonder. Illustrators and authors implant characters in childrens' brains that may stay with them their whole lives and help shape the kind of person they become. Can't get much cooler than that. I hope I was able to convey some of this to the audience.

Outline: We'd love to hear of your process for creating your detailed work.

Shane: When I started my career I worked with anything I could get my hands on. Scraperboard was perfect for newsprint jobs and gouache was ideal because it dried quickly and flat and printed well. But eventually I went to the dark side and I've been working with a computer for many years now. I use a Wacom tablet and draw with an electronic pen. For a long while I even sketched directly on to the tablet but I'm turning back to pencil sketches now for their fluidity. I can then chop up the sketches and work out the sizing on the computer. My preferred programme for the finals is Photoshop because it's perfect for drawing. I love the ease of the tools and the quality of the brushes. I add certain filters along the way but not so they overpower the image.

Outline: With some history in the illustration world, it would be great to get your perspective on the present, and your vision of the future of the industry. What challenges have you had in your own business, and how do you plan

(and safeguard) for the future?

Shane: The illustration world has changed dramatically since I started. No longer can we just call ourselves magazine illustrators or book illustrators or whatever. We have to always evolve and try new avenues. Fees have shrunk, no question, and the competition just gets fiercer. There are so many talented illustrators out there and so we have to market ourselves strategically and constantly. Be prepared to compromise at times. Most jobs are about collaboration, listening and learning and taking advice. We need to work with people who know more than we do. I love all the variations of ebooks and apps for kids these days but I also think traditional books will never fade, parents and kids will always value that quite time, curled up in a corner, immersed in a good book. What are some of the things I'm doing to safeguard for the future? An L.A based app company is helping to turn some of my books into ebooks which will be available on all platforms so we'll see how that goes. I have a new agent in London called The Organisation. I try to keep up an on-line presence and my work is available from shops like Red Bubble and Society 6. I enter competitions when I can and have my work on certain illustration directories. I send email promotions and postcards to agencies, magazines and publishers. I try to always have some personal projects on the go. And I guess if all else fails I could try being a postie. At least you get some fresh air every day.

Outline: Who are your favourite artists?

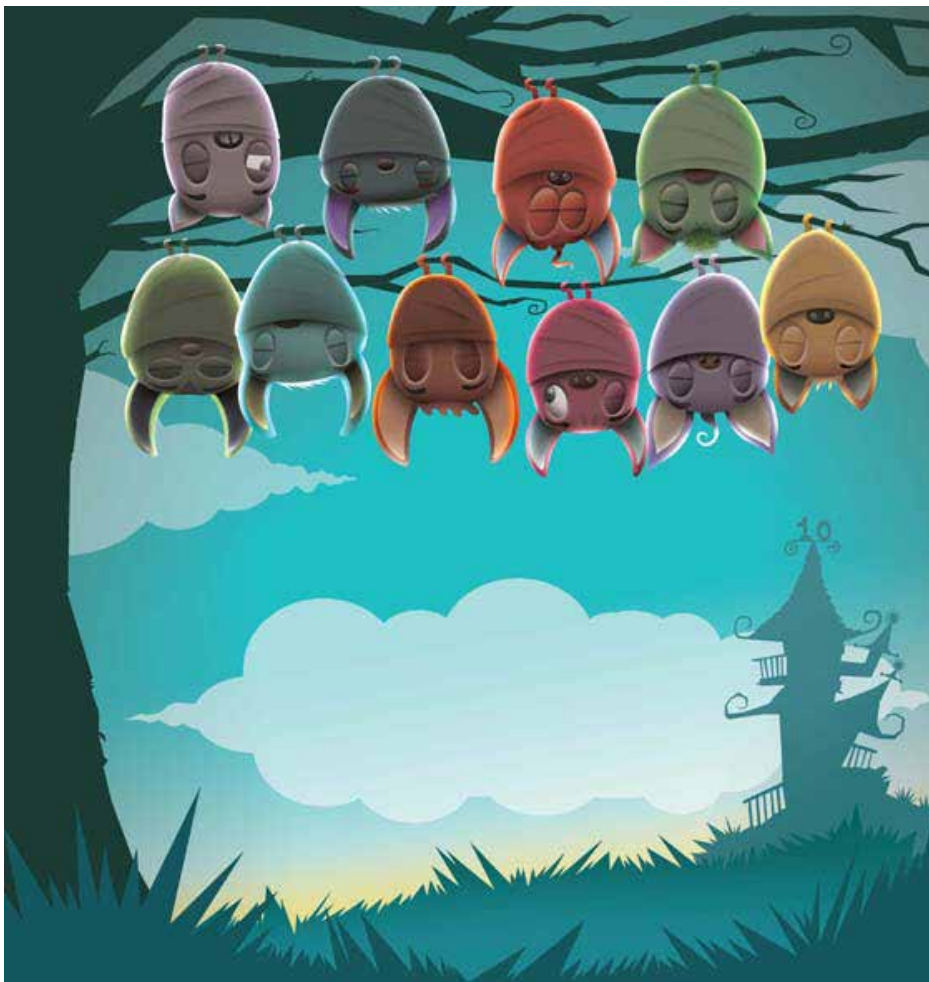
Shane: I have many favourites. I love some of the British painters from the 90's like Fiona Rae, Gary Hume and Ian Davenport. I've always loved Warhol, Rothko and Basquiat. I was very influenced by the illustrators that emerged in the late 70's, early 80's like Anne Howeson, Robert Mason, Anthony Russo and Melbourne's Robert Pearce who was a friend. And in the kids book field I admire Lane Smith, Simon Bartram, Bob Staake and loads of others, the list is endless.

Outline: What was the first book that "spoke" to you?

Shane: I was obsessed with *Peanuts* when I was a kid. I'd get my mum to buy me those paperback editions and I'd pore over them for hours. I also devoured *Mad* magazines and the poor imitators like *Cracked* and *Crazy*. But the first childrens book that really touched me was *Where The Wild Things Are*. Those beasts fascinated me and the hatched drawings were so beautiful and full of life. To this day that book is still hard to beat.

{CLICK!} Shane McGowan

Website http://www.shanemcgworld.com
Facebook https://www.facebook.com/ShaneMcGIllustrator
Instagramhttp://instagram.com/shanemcgillustration



Mitch Vane

Mitch Vane

I love the looseness of Mitch's work - indian ink and watercolours, as well as more textured paintings. Her work oozes humour and expression, which is a perfect match for children's books. Mitch shares a deeper look at her work, studio, books and great deal of industry experience.

Outline: As an experienced children's book illustrator we'd love to hear how you made your first inroads into the industry, and some favourite projects from your career so far.

Mitch: I didn't really get into Children's Book illustration until my early thirties - up until that point I think I'd had a go at just about every type of illustration job there is . When I left school I did a 3 year graphic design course at RMIT and at the time I thought I wanted to be an art director so this led me straight into advertising agencies working as a Visualiser (or 'wrist') So I spent years doing storyboards and layouts , handling long hours and killer deadlines , which was fun for a while but eventually I was feeling burnt out and wondering why I was using all my creativity on work that had the lifespan of a boardroom meeting.

I made the transition to full time illustrator while I was living in London and came back to Oz with a fresh attitude towards what direction I wanted to take - I spent hours building up a folio of the kind of work I enjoyed doing -then literally made calls and knocked on doors and lugged my folio around (there was no internet in those days!) until slowly I started getting some really great jobs. Some really weird ones too, but as a freelancer, it's hard to say no to work. I would convince myself that I could make incontinence pads look really cool with my 'out there' illustrative style.

I still remember my first Children's book - it was a dream job. Reed Publishing commissioned me to illustrate a gorgeous story about a cheeky dog called Mab. I had no restrictions other than the format of the book - compared to advertising, the deadlines went forever, and I got to meet & work with the author (Jutta Goetze) We had lots of lunches and I even went to her house and met the real dog Mab

I was slowly shedding my old visualising habits and discovered a freshness and simplicity in my work and because I had a good rapport with both the publisher and the author, the illustrations came easily and I ended up doing two more books in the series. Obviously not every job has been that easy, and sometimes I don't even get to meet the author of the books I illustrate and only have an email relationship with the publisher , but illustrating *My Dog Mab* marks the time when I fell in love with the whole process of creating characters and telling stories. It put meaning into my work. Oh and of course there was the total buzz of seeing my work as a printed book for the first time (- actually, I'll NEVER get tired of that.)

Outline: What materials do you like to use for your illustrations? Do these change according to projects/ book theme?

Mitch: Most of my book illustrations are done with watercolour and dip pen and Indian ink- occaisionally I'll use a pencil outline, but I really love the energy of the scratchy pen line and the medium seems to suit the humerous nature of my work. It's always a little dangerous and unpredictale - but the accidental nature of the medium keeps the work fresh.

I have mastered the art of cleaning up ink splots and the white out pen is the best invention EVER! I also love acrylic paint and I use that for editorial work or for my own painting projects, but it seems to flatten out my images if I use it for book illustrations.

Outline: Do you find now with your experience you still need to "knock on the door" of publishing houses, or do they get in touch directly now when the project is a good fit?

Mitch: A lot of publishers are familiar with my style now and keep me in mind for projects that might suit - usually stories with a humorous bent . But that doesn't mean I've stopped knocking on doors - I think it's important to keep a public profile, more so now than ever before . There is just so much good work out there competing for attention and so many more clever ways of getting that attention. Everyone is looking for the next best thing , something new, something groovy- so I think it's important to keep fresh

and always a little hungry. It's particularly important to have a presence online - the IA & Books Illustrated network is invaluable, & I pick up a bit of new work through my website .

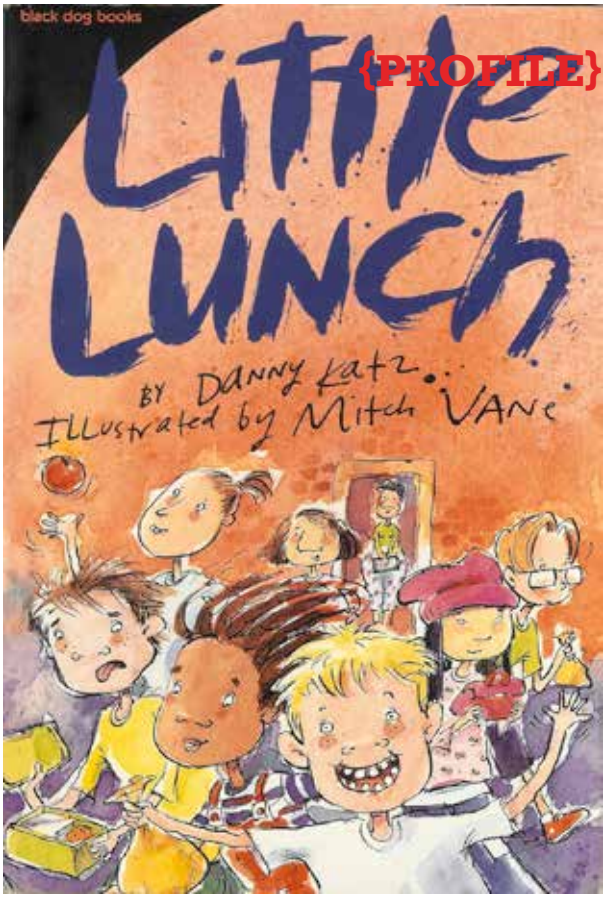
Outline: We all know that the publishing industry has gone through some major changes over the past decade. Have you noticed any changes for children's books or the editorial/illustration process, or do you think these changes are mainly limited to adult/non fiction etc books?

Mitch: To be honest, I haven't been too affected by changes in the industry. Perhaps there is a little less of the bread and butter stuff going around, but generally it's business as usual. I feel the industry is in transition - but still incredibly healthy. Budgets are shrinking so I get very few newsprint commissions these days, but I feel the children's book industry is alive and kicking - shifting a little to allow for the e-book & online competition - but still producing a steady stream of exciting books and beautiful images. People will always want to buy children's books. I think the biggest change for me as an artist is how quickly everything can be produced now - I honed my drawing skills in the hard copy years. It was a slower process - there was a lot more time allotted to complete work and all I needed to supply was the artwork itself. Now everything can be emailed, jpegd, photoshopped, downloaded , formatted - and the illustrator's skills have broadened to suit the bottomless pitt of creative possibilities that computers have to offer.

As an (almost) complete luddite, I am feeling the pressure of keeping up with the technology -especially supplying artwork files, or even just maintaining my own website . As much as I am totally enthralled by the medium and the great new wave of computer generated artwork, I just can't bring myself to spend hours in front of a screen to learn those skills -It just doesn't do it for me. I love shuffling paper around, rubbing things out, smelling the paint, getting my hands dirty - and there are enough artists out there that can do that work so much better than me.

Outline: You've partnered up with your real life partner for several of your children's books. Could you tell us about the process and benefits - as well as difficulties? Does it make the writing/illustration process easier for either of you?

Mitch: Working with your partner has it's obvious drawbacks - including overkill - so we have worked out a good system over the years where we will sit and brain-storm ideas then go off and do our own thing separately. I have an outdoor studio and we don't do lunch, or make each other tea, so we can go hours without seeing each other. I'll show him my first round of page roughs and he will always come up with clever ideas to make an image



funny, or give it an extra twist. I edit almost all of Danny's work, including his *Modern Guru* and humour columns in *The Age* (cheap bloody labour if you ask me!)

**The Little Lunch* series is up there as my all time fave. It marks the beginning of Danny and I working together as a team and is a personal career highlight. (And Maryann Ballantyne, who was responsible for commissioning my first children's book, was involved in us creating this series well!). Black Dog Books gave us the ideal brief i.e. - they were totally open to whatever we came up with. We were right in the primary school children zone at the time so the stories Danny wrote just fell out of him. There is so much of our children and their friends and the many small but important moments in their school lives in his stories. *The Little Lunch* characters I drew are a hybrid mix of all the kids we knew at their primary school. I spent so many hours in the school yard before and after school that I had built up this library of characters in my head - the things that make them unique, their hairstyles, wonky teeth, their body language - so it was a very spontaneous and natural process for me. Black Dog were happy to let me scratch out the drawings and then fit the text around them which was a completely liberating way to work .

**Little Lunch* has been picked up by Gristmill (creators of *The Librarians, Very Small Business/Upper Middle Bogan*) and they are currently working on 26 short episodes of *Little Lunch* stories in a mockumentary type format to be shown on the ABC in 2015. Working on the pilot episode and seeing our characters literally come to life has been an incredibly experience and a huge learning curve

Outline: We'd love to hear about school and library visits. How to kids respond to your work?

Mitch: I still get completely terrified just before I do a school or a library gig, but I know that as soon as the kids pile in with their laughter and questions and energy, all will all be ok. Through many trials and many errors I have learned how to navigate big groups and made a few rules

1. Always allow half an hour more than you need to get to the venue - arriving hot and stressed and sweaty is not a good look

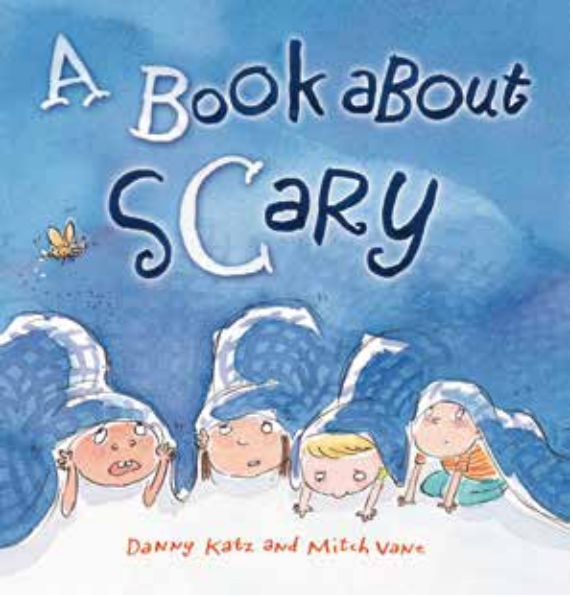
2: Not to do any groups older than Grade 6 (I have two teenagers at home, I don't have to deal with a room full of them)

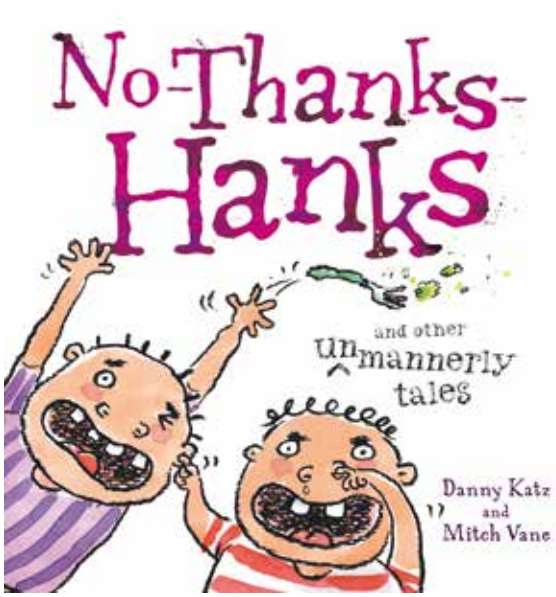
3: Not to blather on too long - just get them started on drawing as soon as possible

4: Make sure the kids draw with black markers, not pencil, or they will spend the whole hour rubbing out their drawings.

Oh and 4: Don't agree to sign any scraps of paper unless you are prepared to sit there and do 50 of them.

The kids love it when I draw on the whiteboard and show them some little tricks on how to make a face funny, or create an expression or make something look like it's moving. My favourite thing is when we draw a funny character together and I get them to choose the details -*what kind of hair? is it a human? Short? does it have a pet ? Is it happy? , sad?, insaaaaaane?, and what is going on in the picture?* The group always gets so excited , and usually loud, and they throw me some really difficult things to draw.





But even if I draw it badly, it helps me explain the process of creating characters and that sometimes the best drawings come out of mistakes.

Mistakes are good.

Outline: You've mentioned in interviews that you draw inspiration from your children. Could you share with us some examples, and any other inspiration sources you turn to? It would be great to hear any other resources or inspiring websites/galleries you refer to for your work.

Mitch: I am a real people watcher and I am constantly storing away ideas in my head for later use. I love my phone camera - it has so much random stuff on it that I think I might find useful one day. I am currently using shots I took of my friend's kelpie for a book I am working on at the moment. I have an inspiration wall in my studio with clippings and postcards and scribbled ideas which is constantly changing -

Google is amazing. I used to lose hours in the library trying to find reference of some obscure insect or medieval costume or whatever I was drawing - now the computer does it for me in 5 seconds.

It is also great for dipping into that great worldwide pool of creativity when I am beginning a painting and I need a bit of a creative leg up - bit like a caffeine hit. I find it difficult to make that transition from drawing children's books to doing my own painting projects so I sometimes spend a day just easing into a painters mindset by trawling the art sites online , or going to a few galleries. Flinders Lane, The NGV and the Ian Potter centre are always good for a visit . Illustration - wise I always keep an eye on what groups like Lamington Drive are up to and often browse through the IA and SOBi and overseas illustration group files. I put work into at least 1or 2 group exhibitions during the year to keep me creating new stuff, and I love the artist's community that is constantly growing on Facebook.
I have just got involved with a great new project set up by Tania McCartney https://www.facebook.com/groups/418616991575037/ which encourages artists to submit illustrations based on a different themes supplied each week. Any excuse to keep drawing.

Seriously, it's the best job in the world, and I hope to be doing it until I'm eighty - even if my hands gave out I'd probably keep painting with a brush in my mouth.

My list of inspiration sources is endless so these are a few recent finds and a few perennial favourites

http://www.ralphsteadman.com/
Joff Winterhart - (Days of the Bagnold Summer is sublime)
http://www.vladimirradunsky.com/
http://jonklassen.tumblr.com/
(Have a look at The Dark by Lemony Snicket)
http://serco-story.theglobalmail.org/
http://www.stephenbird.net
http://www.gemmacorrell.com/
http://www.rexray.com/
http://www.fecalface.com/SF/
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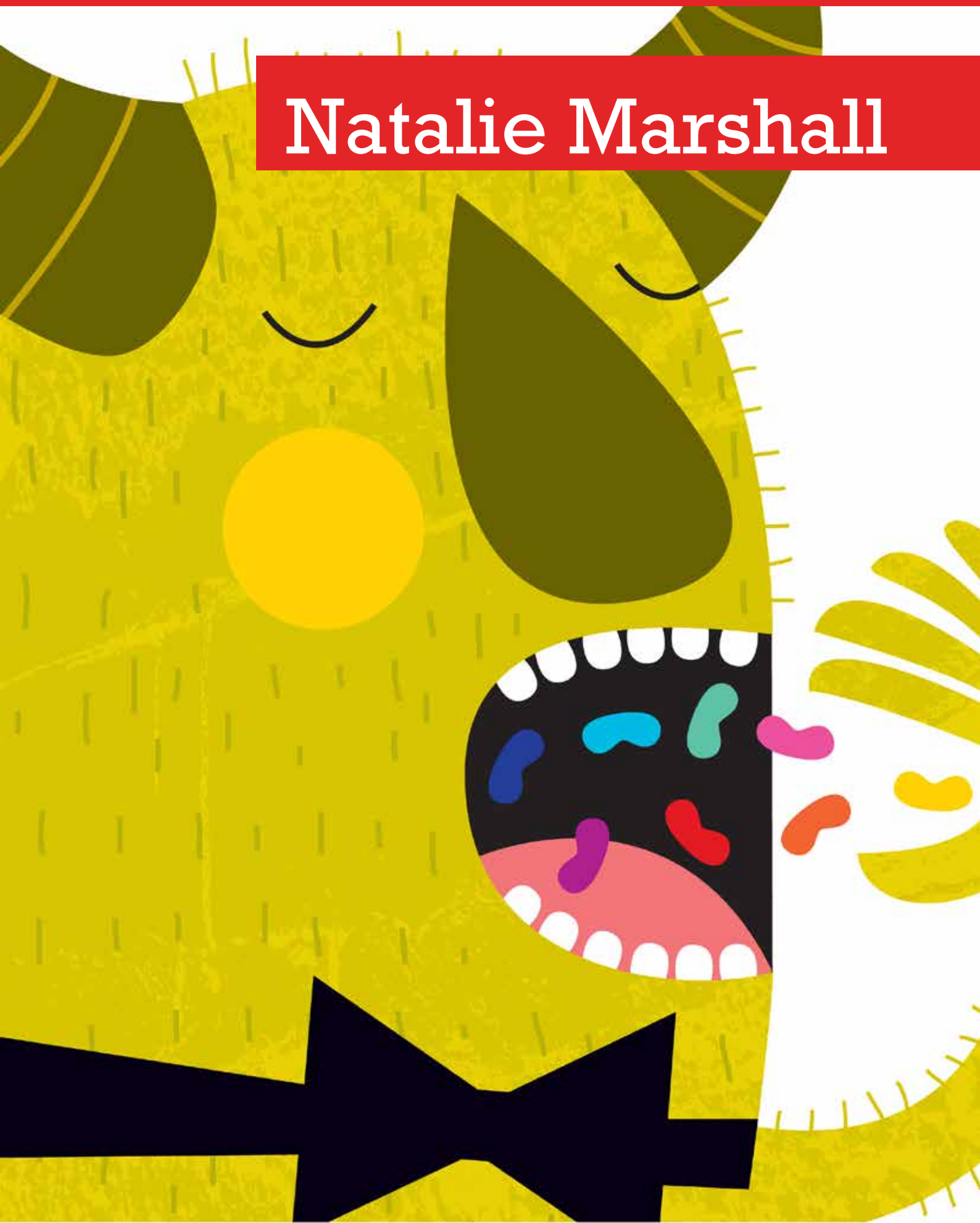
http://www.redbubble.com/

{CLICK!} Mitch Vane
Website http://www.mitchvane.com/

Natalie Marshall



Natalie Marshall

Natalie Marshall creates sweet, bold graphic illustration that lends itself so well to cards and children's books. Discovered by an editor at a market, her path towards publishing seemed destined for this talented mother/designer/illustrator.

Outline: We'd love to hear of your career path leading up to current work as a children's book illustrator. Did you always want to illustrate children's books?

Natalie: This is going to sound cheesy but when I was little I thought that doing the drawings for a children's book would be the best job in the world. I was obsessed with Little Golden books, Disney and any illustrated fairy tales. Then I got older and my book dream got shunted because I could not see a way to go from being a kid who was pretty good at drawing to being a grown-up who was good at drawing for kids. So when I grew up I went to university to study design. While I was at uni I worked part-time in a bookshop to fund my studies.

I re-discovered my love of children's books and made good use of my staff discount!

When I finished my uni degree I decided to stay at uni for another year to complete an Honours Degree in Graphic Design. I focused on the role of illustration in design and ended the year with the department illustration award.

Then I went to work as a graphic designer.

I worked as a designer in Melbourne, then in New York and in London. These were all very corporate jobs but I loved the challenge of working on annual reports and corporate branding - and I got to travel the world!

When I had my first baby I discovered children's books - again! But this time it was from a different perspective as it was the first time I had seen how a baby interacts with books. Then as my daughter grew we spent alot of time looking at books and I loved it as much as she did...well, I probably loved it more!

After my second baby I began to REALLY miss the creative aspect of my career so I started drawing at night when the kids were asleep. I naturally started creating on the Mac as that had been my main creative tool for a really long time. I drew every night for a year. Plus, at the end of a day of looking after two small children I did not have the energy to get out paint and brushes etc. The Mac was so easy - turn it on - draw - save - turn it off. No paints to pack away

and no chance of work getting messed up by two little inquisitive kids.

I did some posters for my girls' room, then I did some prints for friends, then I saw an opportunity to put my prints on greeting cards. After much research I decided to have a go at it. With my design and print background it was easy for me to put them together myself - and Little Red Owl cards was born. I spent a couple of summers having a stall at the Red Hill market selling prints and cards.

It was at Red Hill one day that I met a children's book editor. She asked if I would be interested in illustrating children's books (I don't need to say that I almost passed with shock out on the spot!). A few weeks later I was drawing my first two books and I was in creative HEAVEN. Childhood dream comes true!

Outline: Could you tell us about an average "day in the office" for your illustration business now?

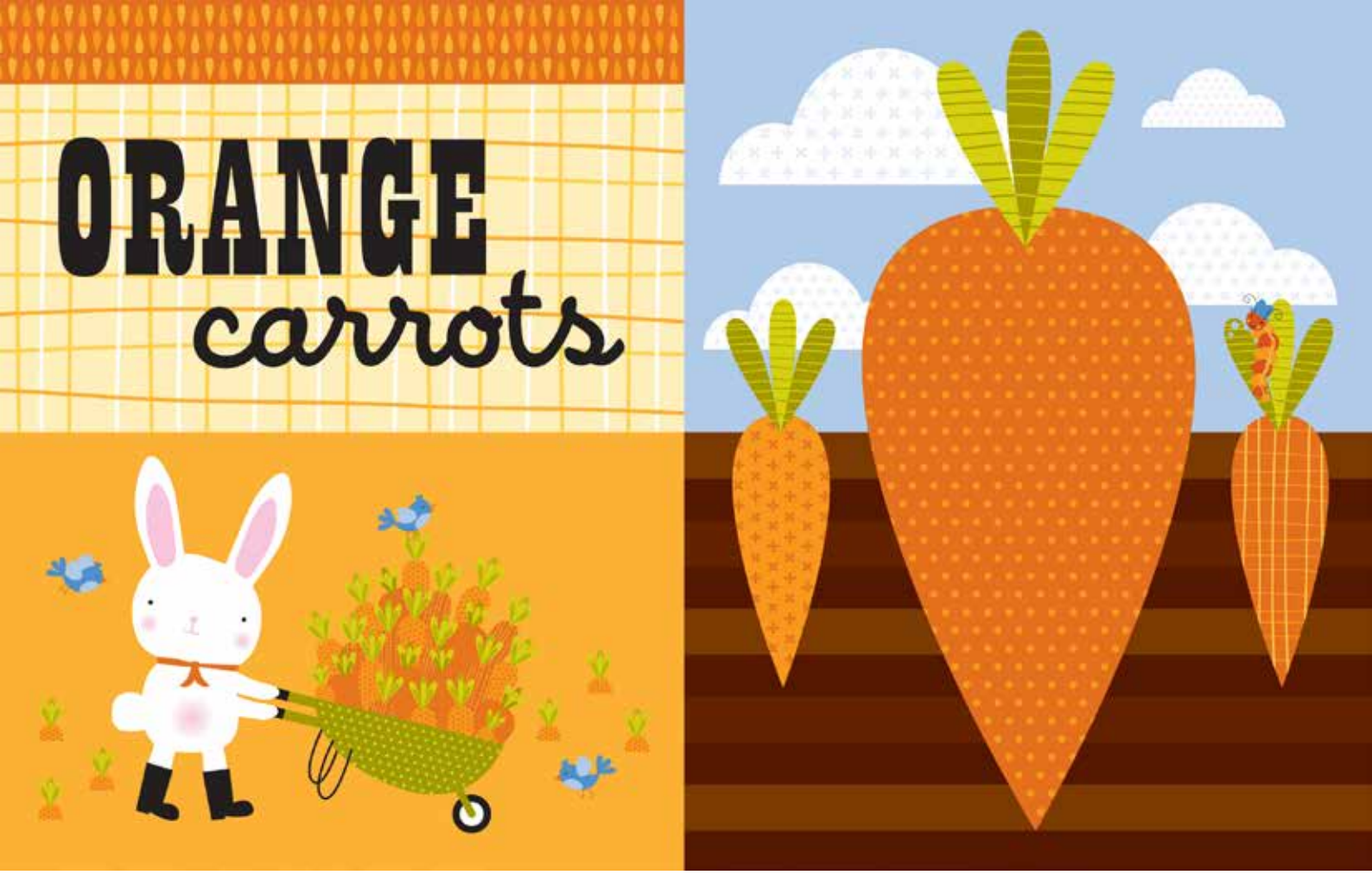
Natalie: Average day goes something like this: drop the girls at school by 9.00am, have a coffee or go for a swim (or both), head home to do emails, do any urgent paperwork, fill card orders if I need to. Then I have a few hours to work on whatever projects I am working on. Then pick the girls up from school at 3.30pm and go back into 'mum mode' until about 8.30pm when I normally go back to my desk and continue drawing until my eyes get tired and I have to go to bed. When I am on a deadline though, there is no coffee, no swimming and some very late nights working.

Outline: Has having children of your own influenced your work? How do you balance your studio work with the demands of a young family?

Natalie: Having my own children has influenced my work immensely. I actually credit my girls with the career path that I am now on - if I had not had them to bring me back to illustration and re-discover children's books then I would have continued working in corporate design and my little illustration dream would still be packed away in a box somewhere.

I am not sure if I actually have a work / life balance. My work is a big part of my life and my life is a big part of my work. I will admit to being a bit obsessed with my email - because many of my clients are overseas I often get feedback and jobs via email when I wake up in the morning. I often try to read my email before my eyes are open. We did go away for 6 weeks late last year in a caravan - it was so much fun AND it forced me to deal with my email addiction as we were often out of reception range!

Outline: With such a strong graphic style, your illustrations translate so well to cards. How did you set up your business Little Red Owl cards and how do you develop your



retail relationships?

Natalie: When I first thought of doing cards I did a ton of research into printers, print costs, recycled stocks, envelopes and cello bags. I spent alot of time at the shops looking at cards and seeing where my cards would potentially fit in and talking to retailers. I mocked up my first 12 designs and asked my family and friends for feedback. I decided that I wanted to be as eco friendly as possible and also have my cards printed locally in Melbourne. I had quite a few people tell me to print them in China to get a better price but that was not the direction I wanted to go in.

At the time of my first print run, my husband and I were not exactly rolling in money since I had pretty much been home full-time with our girls, so it was a bit of a risk for us to invest the funds into cards, envelopes and cello bags. It was a bit stressful! But my husband was very supportive of me and always has been. After the first print run was delivered to my house I don't think I slept for a week due to worrying about not selling 6000 cards - what would I do with them if they did not sell!

But my first orders came in and I dedicated time to making appointments with retailers that I thought would be most likely to stock my designs. I learnt alot about keeping in contact with my retailers and getting stock to them quickly if they needed it. I also got very used to invoicing and all the paperwork that goes along with running even a very small business. My first print run sold out in a few months, and I could sleep again. After a couple of years on my own I decided that the 'selling' side of the business was taking too much time as I was getting more and more book work. I found a wholesaler to work with and that takes the pressure off me a bit. I have now sold over 35,000 Little Red Owl cards and counting! And I still love designing new ranges as much as I did the first time around.

Outline: You have representation by the Bright Agency abroad. Could you tell us a little about this agency, and their work in an international environment? Do you need to adapt your style for different markets?

Natalie: I had just published my first two books with The Five Mile Press when I received an email from Vicki, the head of the Bright Agency in London. Her email was a big surprise to me but she had seen my books and wondered if Bright could represent me internationally. My initial reaction was one of shock and total disbelief. After I signed with Bright I learnt alot about the world of licensing and working with international clients. Bright has been amazingly supportive and through them I have licensed work to American Greetings, Papyrus, Hallmark US and lots of other card companies. My illustrations have appeared on cards and all kinds of gift stationery and other formats including wall decals and coffee mugs.

Bright has also helped me build a presence in the children's book area and I have worked with lots of international publishers (Blue Apple Books, Simon and Schuster, Scholastic) which has been pretty much totally amazing. Since I signed with Bright I have illustrated over thirty children's books - ranging from small little baby books to large hardcover story books for older kids. I have

also recently branched out into writing and illustrating which has been a challenge. I am super proud of the four Millie-Mae Seasons books I published with The Five Mile Press late in 2013. I wrote and illustrated the four volumes very much based on the things my own girls are interested in. The Five Mile Press was so supportive and gave me free rein to write and illustrate as my heart desired so I am very happy that Millie-Mae has been successful!

I have not found that I need to adapt my style very much at all. I was once asked by a client to make my digital drawings look more like watercolor - but that was a disaster. I could not adapt my natural style and the project bombed. That was a great learning experience. Since then I have decided to be proud that my work is purely digital and in many ways digital is an asset in terms of time management and making client amends. I remain in awe of the illustrators who produce beautiful pen and ink drawings or watercolor illustrations. I am especially in love with the work of my Canadian friend Elly MacKay who creates stunning atmospheric illustrations using her beautiful hand drawings, a custom-made 'theater' lightbox, translucent paper and her camera.

Outline: We'd love to hear of your inspirations and favourite illustrators, both here and abroad.

Natalie: There are so many wonderful illustrators but I am most inspired by illustrators from the 50s, 60s and 70s (I am a retro girl at heart) - I love the work of Mary Blair (doesn't everyone?), Saul Bass, Miroslav Sasek, Charley Harper and Alice and Martin Provensen. I also terribly in love with the work of Jon Klassen, Marc Boutavant, Peter Brown and Isabelle Arsenault.

Inspirations? Mmmm - I always worry that my inspirations will seem terribly boring to other people - but here they are - my kids, the natural world, animals, education as well as pattern and color. I love to think that a small child will look at one of my books and the illustrations will make them giggle (a rabbit wearing gumboots) and they will also learn a little something about the world (what a circle looks like, what the color red is).

Outline: Could you share any upcoming projects you are excited about?

Natalie: Last year I worked on two titles for Simon & Schuster on a book format that was completely new to me and it was very challenging. The format consists of large sliding panels on each spread - as you slide the panels the illustrations change and words appear and disappear. The books aim to teach young children about scale and measurement. They were hard conceptually and difficult mechanically. The designer I worked with in London was so great - we sent proofs back and forth almost every day and had quite a few Skype meetings while we nutted it all out. In the end I am very happy with the books and can't wait to see the finished product. They are called 'Small, Smaller, Smallest' and 'Up, Down, Across' and are due for release in 210 days!

Outline: Is there any final advice you can provide to other illustrators looking to break into the children's book market?

Natalie: Oh that is SUCH a hard question!

Draw, draw, draw in the medium you are most comfortable in. Draw what you love how you love to draw it. Develop a portfolio of 10-12 of your best pieces. Send your portfolio to editors and publishing houses that you think might be interested in your style. Think about interpreting a few pages of a classic story in your own way. Talk to people. Have a decent website. Put yourself out there. Look at kid's books that are successful. Look at the work of illustrators who have won awards in their field. Join Illustrators Australia!

{CLICK!} **Natalie Marshall**

Website http://www.nataliemarshall.com.au

Shaun Tan - Originality and Creativity

Shaun Tan generously shares essays, notes and thoughts on his website, http://www.shauntan.net. We conclude this edition with Shaun's thoughts on originality and creativity, with permission granted via his website - a great resource for children's book illustrators, and in fact, any artist.

Original thought is like original sin: both happened before you were born to people you could not possibly have met.

- Fran Liebowitz

Books! Bottled chatter! Things that some other simian has formerly said.

- Clarence Day.

Paul Klee once described an artist as being like a tree, drawing the minerals of experience from its roots - things observed, read, told and felt - and slowly processing them into new leaves. The palaeontologist Stephen Jay Gould notes that the greatest discoveries are to be found not in a freshly hewn cliff of shale, but in old museum collections, by rethinking the relationships between the objects that have already been archived in our knowledge.

The principle that 'originality' is more about a kind of transformation of existing ideas than the invention of entirely new ones is one that I can relate to as an artist and author. I'm wary of using words like 'inspiration' or 'creativity' without at least trying to demystify them first. They can easily convey a false impression that ideas or feelings appear spontaneously and of their own accord; "creation" in particular is a term that originally entered our language with divine connotations. My own experience is that inspiration is has more to do with careful research and looking for a challenge; and that creativity is about playing with what I find, testing one proposition against another and seeing how things combine and react.

My picture books have in the past been recognised as 'highly imaginative', 'strikingly original' and even 'magical'. There is, however, certainly nothing mysterious about the way they are produced. Each work contains many thousands of ingredients, experiments, discoveries and transforming decisions executed over several months, compressed into a very small space, 32 pages of words and pictures. Everything can be explained in terms of process, influences, developmental elaboration and reduction. What is original is not the ideas themselves, but the way they are put together. The fact that we recognise anything at all would seem to indicate that this is the case - a truly original idea would probably be so unfamiliar as to be unreadable, an impenetrably alien artefact.

Often the most interesting stories are ones which tell us things that we already know but haven't yet articulated in our minds. Or more precisely, they encourage us to look at familiar things in different ways, as if to remind us of their true meaning; the way we live, the things we encounter, way we think and so on. Looking at my own work as an illustrator, I can discuss how this has a lot to do with combining various ideas from different sources to produce unexpected results, very much like rubbing different stones together for sparks, and gradually working these into flames.

The Rabbits is a good example, and perhaps my most widely circulated and discussed book. On one hand it is a story we should all be familiar with as an historical narrative, the European invasion of Australia and subsequent injustices perpetrated against the indigenous population. More universally, it's the story of colonisation everywhere, about power, ignorance and environmental destruction. It is also an animal fable, a dark and serious one, a storytelling strategy we can also recognise. One might think of Richard Adams' *Watership Down* or George Orwell's *Animal Farm* as precedents, for instance, but already there is an unexpected combining of elements we haven't seen before, quite strange and 'original.'

When I received John Marsden's text for this book, via my publisher, I experienced a sensation that usually accompanies the beginning of a new project: not knowing what to do! By itself, the half-page fax of text generated no ideas visually - none that were appropriately interesting at least (the image of Beatrix Potter bunnies with redcoats, muskets and British flags was not going to work - that's one thing I did know). I eventually realised that what I had to do was extend the metaphorical logic of the text even further, and introduce more unexpected ideas to build a parallel story of my own. Not an illustration of the text, but something to react with it symbiotically.

The research involved was very broad, an omnivorous study of everything from tree kangaroos at Perth Zoo, which I spent a day sketching, to old Victorian photographs of public works being constructed, colonial drawings in the State gallery, books about antique furniture, industrial architecture, Surrealism. I also reviewed some of my old

science fiction drawings languishing in my folio, including a couple which happened to deal with 18th century figures in strange antipodean deserts, and ended up working several ideas from these into The Rabbits.

Stylistically, the book borrows both consciously and unconsciously from many sources: Ancient Egyptian friezes, unusual films such as Brazil and Yellow Submarine, the work of other illustrators such as Ralph Steadman, Milton Glaser, Gerald Scarfe and some Australian landscape painters; Arthur Streeton, Fred Williams and Brett Whiteley. The list goes on; ultimately I am influenced by anything that seems interesting to me, whether it's a painting in a gallery or the pattern of plumbing on the wall behind my local supermarket. My own personal style of drawing, painting and thinking visually emerges from all of these, not to mention innumerable other experiences.

As well as visual sources, many ideas for the illustrations emerged from reading history. Almost every image can, for instance, be footnoted with a reference to Henry Reynold's *"The Other Side of the Frontier"*, my most valuable reference book. Accounts of Aboriginal impressions of the arrival of European ships, animals, customs and technologies, the immense cultural rift between visitors and inhabitants, the patterns of escalating violence: all these proved to be indispensable in the creation of an equivalent imagined universe populated by strange animals and machines.

I'm often thinking of different things I've read, or particular words, while I draw and paint which best express the particular poetry of colour, line and form I am after. A passage from David Malouf's *Remembering Babylon*, which I happened to have been reading just before working on *The Rabbits,* suggested to me one way of illustrating a particular scene as a bright, lyrical landscape; "...alive and dazzling; some of it even in the deepest shade throwing off luminous flares... and all of it crackling and creaking and swelling and bursting with growth." The illustration itself is vibrant and yellow, swimming with hidden shapes and organic tensions.

I had also finished my arts degree honours dissertation a couple of years beforehand, which was all about the way in which industrial cultures typically view the natural world through some kind of technological apparatus, whether photographs, wildlife documentaries, telecommunications, theme parks or computer imaging. As a result, many of the pictures for *the Rabbits* tend to be about looking at the world through various artificial framing devices. Lenses, telescopes, maps and paintings feature strongly, all transforming perceptions of an unfamiliar country to meet particular cultural expectations. The inability of the rabbits to see the look beyond their own preconceptions and flawed ideals is a central theme that emerges from these visual cues.

The illustration used on the cover for *The Rabbits* is a particularly good example of developing imagery from reference sources. It is based on a 19th century painting of Cook's first landing at Botany Bay, a colour reproduction of which I found in an old encyclopaedia. The arrangement of figures striding ashore from left to right is mirrored by the rabbit figures, with similar clothing, flag and gun; two Aborigines on a distant dune in the original painting have been replaced by two marsupial animals. There are similar lighting and atmospheric effects at work, although quite exaggerated, and the use of oils on canvas with thin yellow glazes emulates the technique used in paintings of the period.

E. Phillips Fox. (1900?) painting of James Cook landing at Botany Bay, National Gallery of Victoria

'They came by water' from The Rabbits, 1998. Published by Lothian Books/Hachette Australia

It could almost be read as a satirical parody, although this is not really my intention. Whether the source is recognisable is irrelevant: what does matter is the resonance. It borrows rather than alludes, evoking a certain 19th Century European way of framing moments of historical significance, where key figures are actors on the world's stage, supernaturally well composed, monumental and mythical. Everything about the source painting by E. Phillips Fox contains a familiar ideology, all about progress and destiny, the planting of flags and the arrival of legitimate historical narrative.

These are ideas that we are invited to read in a less recognisable and more challenging form in my own illustration. The ship leaps forth like a skyscraper or knife, echoed by scalpel-like shadows and pointed feet, collars and guns, the lighting is more theatrical than ever. I wanted to introduce a surreal dreamlike quality, ambiguous in terms of mixed awe and dread, exaggerated but not caricatured or didactic. Most of all, I wanted to produce an image that was enigmatic and thought-provoking. It's up to the reader to draw whatever meaning they wish.

Like *The Rabbits, The Lost Thing* is quite a strange book, but its success among readers is due in no small part to a familiar premise, a boy finding a lost animal at his local beach and taking it home. In itself, very unoriginal, except that this is just a point of departure, much as the history of colonisation is for *The Rabbits.* The lost animal is, after all, not a stray dog, but a huge tentacled creature evolved from drawings of pebble crabs and old-fashioned cast iron stoves, among other things. Furthermore, the setting of the story owes more to my visual research of industrial architecture, including a local derelict power station in East Perth, and the urban landscapes of artists like Edward Hopper, John Brack and Jeffrey Smart, than your average residential suburb (although it started off as an average residential suburb).

Many other elements based on various references are combined; ideas from looking at a 1930's copy of Popular Mechanics, some of my Dad's old physics and calculus textbooks which I used as a collage medium in the final illustrations, photographs of cloud formations and Melbourne trams. I also had a reproduction of the medieval artist Hieronymous Bosch's bizarre painting "The Garden of Earthly Delights" stuck on my kitchen cupboard, next to a photograph of air-intake pipes on a ship by Charles Sheeler, and American modernist painter. All of these elements came together in the production of a visual narrative that is at once very simple and accessible, yet complex and irreducibly enigmatic, even for me - it wouldn't work if I understood too much about it.

For me, that's what creativity is - playing with found objects, reconstructing things that already exist, transforming ideas or stories I already know. It's not about the colonisation of new territory, it's about exploring inwards, examining your existing presumptions, squinting at the archive of experience from new angles, and hoping for some sort of revelation. What really matters is whether we as readers continue to think about the things we have read and seen long after the final page is turned.

{CLICK!} Shaun Tan

Website http://www.shauntan.net

Read more thoughts by Shaun Tan:

http://www.shauntan.net/comments1.html

IBBY Keynote, London 2012: 'Strange Migrations'

– A paper delivered at a conference of the International Board on Books for Young People (IBBY), speaking to the theme of 'crossing boundaries, migration and translation.'

PICTURE BOOKS: Who Are They For? (2002)

– my reactio http://www.shauntan.net/images/comments-notes-head.gif n to the common assumption that illustrated stories are only for children.

WORDS & PICTURES, AN INTIMATE DISTANCE (2010)

– An essay about the visual language of illustration, originally written for ABC Radio National's Lingua Franca.