

Illustration

I suspect that many teachers at all levels of education would agree with me in claiming that they have probably learnt more from their students than they have taught them. An instance where I found this particularly true was many years ago when I was teaching an MA module on literature in the curriculum, and was fortunate enough to have in the group several people who certainly at the practical level knew more than I did. This was particularly the case for the session on Picture Books and I count my real education in Visual Texts as beginning at that point. One of that group was Prue Goodwin, who has been persuaded to contribute an article to the current issue; the insights that she and others, then and subsequently, have supplied in this area has helped me towards becoming visual literate.

This issue of *IBBYLink* presents a number of approaches to the subject of picture books and book illustration, ranging from the viewpoints of an illustrator and a publisher to those of readers (or beholders) who are keen to share the delight they have found in artists as diverse as William Blake and Quentin Blake and a good many in between. The temptation that the kind of very literate people who form our readership may have had in the past to ignore the visual in order to concentrate on the verbal is remote in today's pictorially rich children's book environment.

Among the plethora of picture books as such, it is still worth noting that a good many children's books for older readers appear without any illustration at all except for the one on the front cover. This phenomenon is quite unlike the situation in the past, when even books for adults often carried illustrations by well-known artists (Dickens and Cruikshank are perhaps the first names to spring to mind). It does seem possible that this trend is gradually being reversed. Much of the effect of Jacqueline Wilson's books certainly depends on Nick Sharratt's illustrations, while Neil Gaiman's *Coraline* owes some of its bizarre chill to Dave

McKean's pictures. The continued success of Mark Haddon's *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time* is in part due to the variety of designs and diagrams which appear in the adult edition as well as in that for younger readers. A more recent example of illustrations that surely affect the way in which the text is read is Kate Di Camillo's *The Tale of Despereaux*, with pictures by Timothy Basil Ering.

The interaction between written text and picture means that reading is incomplete if either element is excluded. Let us hope that the extent to which children's books are now likely to be filmed or dramatised helps encourage the incorporation of pictures into a wider variety of texts- not to substitute for the visual imagination of the reader, but to provide a way of seeing that readers can use while forming their overall impressions not only of setting and characters, but also of atmosphere and indeed the total experience of the book.

-Pat Pinsent, editor

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Illustration and Picture Books

Ken Wilson Max

Are picture books really necessary? Is illustration valid today? I often ask myself these questions. As an illustrator I think it's important to have an overview as well as a focused one. In the poorest countries, buying a book is not a high priority, especially when food and well being are hard enough to maintain. Many of these countries have oral histories going back centuries (the irony is that no one really knows how far back since nothing was written down!). They have stories which have been told, have evolved or changed with each telling, and are still circulating today. What's the life of a picture book these days? Two to five years, with luck. We spend about a year producing each book, from initial idea to finished product, and before we know it we have to do it all again. This process of reinvention is exhausting.

I grew up not reading for pleasure, but as a boring part of homework. My parents weren't poor - that doesn't explain it - I simply wasn't interested because reading for pleasure seemed impossible. There were many more interesting things to do. The great stories were told to me, to a group of us, to communities. I was in my late teens when I first read a novel from cover to cover. I was in my twenties when I discovered what a picture book really was, while working as a junior designer in a publishing house, but now I make my living from writing illustrating or designing them.

In Europe and America, the idea that children must read dominates. And children have taken to books from very early ages. Picture books try to keep up with their ever sophisticated tastes. That means that publishers too have to try to keep up, or anticipate trends. This presents them with a few problems. Should they steer people's tastes in more controlled ways, publishing books that follow tried and tested formulae, or should they pursue original approaches and gamble with their companies' investments? I think most publishers try to do both, knowing that original ideas and approaches come around very rarely. Illustrators don't always have the option to change their styles or the way they tell stories. It's very difficult to develop a new way of expressing a point of view when the current

one is constantly under review, work in progress, as it were.

What makes the style of a picture book? Marketing, essentially. At fairs like the Bologna Book Fair, the halls containing the different publishing regions also act as separators between this style and that; too many times I have heard that this looks 'so French,' or 'very American,' and so on. Some illustrators have gone from concentrating solely on the image, to having to consider the consequences of their work, and its impact on their first point of contact (the editor or art director or agent); this makes illustration a much tougher profession than ever before. Illustrators also realise that it isn't really up to them to determine what style they have, at least what marketable style anyway. They present it and have to wait until it finds its level.

"Are picture books really necessary?"

This constant focusing of markets has made picture books evolve much quicker. A good picture book is one where all the elements work in harmony - the writing, illustration and the publishing. If one of these elements isn't up to scratch, chances are that the book won't do as well as it should. Readers are undoubtedly more sophisticated than ever before. But we as producers still complain that the average consumer isn't aware enough.

As the old told stories fade away, or find their way into books, so does a way of life for families and communities. Looking on the bright side, though, the stories will never fade away all together once they are in print. And out of those stories will come new picture books, and new ways of retelling them. Each year, new illustrators and writers emerge from colleges around the world. Sometimes publishers put these two elements together and it works for children just as well as it works for the publishing business.

So, picture books are necessary. It is up to illustrators and publishers to make sure that they are available to as many children as possible in as many different formats and languages as the children who need them.

Expect No Happy Endings: Australian Picture Books that tackle uncomfortable universal truths

Prue Goodwin

Disease, depression, cruelty, betrayal, political oppression ... not topics one would immediately associate with children's books – let alone picture books. Yet these are just a few of the themes tackled in books from my collection of contemporary picture books from Australia. All too often the picture book is still regarded as a genre exclusively for the inexperienced reader and, as such, certain subjects are considered 'inappropriate'. There are many examples of the inaccuracy of such opinions (e.g. Raymond Briggs' *When the Wind Blows* or Roberto Innocenti's *Rose Blanche*) and recently some of the most subtle and challenging picture books have been produced in Australia. Many of you will be very familiar with *Way Home* (Hathorn & Rogers) which considers homelessness and *Let the celebrations begin!* (Wild and Vivas) that is set in a concentration camp, but you may not have come across others that have had less impact in the UK. In this article I recommend just four very powerful and potentially disturbing books. All four are challenging and enriching reads.

Jenny Angel

Margaret Wild and Anne Spudvilas

This is the story of Jenny and her efforts to cope with the illness and eventual death of her little brother. Early in the book we learn that Jenny is permanently 'shrouded' in her mother's old raincoat. She inhabits it like a skin and imbues it with imaginary magic powers that hide her wings and ensure that her angelic influence will enable her to save Davy. The raincoat is, at the same time, a burden and a comfort for Jenny. She convinces Davy that everything will be fine and, even as an adult reader, I wanted to believe that her 'magic' would work. Ultimately, at the time of their greatest sorrow, Jenny and her mother both shelter under the coat, sharing their grief and contemplating the inexplicable immensity of reality.

The Rabbits

John Marsden and Shaun Tan

The rabbits of the title are no fluffy bunnies frolicking on the grass. They are destructive invaders, imposing their brutality on a peaceful, indigenous population. The rabbits are technologically advanced but morally bereft. They seize the land, the water, the self-esteem and ultimately the children of the native people. The contrasting visual appearance of each page accentuates the beauty/colour of the past (depicted in paintings that mirror Australian artists such as Arthur Boyd and Fred Williams) compared to the monotone starkness of the imposed rabbit environment. A gut-wrenchingly true version of the European colonisation of Australia told in a voice of despair and bewilderment.

The Red Tree

Shaun Tan

The overwhelming gloom and powerlessness of depression is not easy to describe but Shaun Tan achieves it in *The Red Tree*. In this book the words alone are inadequate to explain the depth of despair experienced during depression, but in combination with the pictures they enable everyone to appreciate the painful separation from reason that such melancholy engenders. The book ends optimistically when the little character discovers the sign of hope which will trigger her return to normality.

Fox

Margaret Wild and Ron Brooks

We have all come across damaged people who cannot make friends, and who will not allow others to be friends either. Such a character is Fox; with his 'haunted eyes,' he is full of 'rage and envy and loneliness.' And this is all the explanation that we get for his strange and callous behaviour towards two other misfits – Dog and Magpie. A troubling, almost mythological, story, with no satisfactory resolution nor any comforting transformation of character to cancel the feelings of betrayal and fear.

Making this list has been so frustrating. I haven't mentioned Gary Crew, Jenni Overend or many other superb Australian picture book creators nor my lovely picture book version of *Advance Australia Fair*. If any of these titles or names are unfamiliar to you, my best advice is seek out as many Australian picture books as possible. They are not all so disturbing; there are loads of enjoyable, light-hearted and funny ones too.

Picture Book Illustration: A Publisher's Perspective

Jude Evans, Little Tiger Press

Developing a picture book list with a strong and successful identity requires a fine balance. In today's flooded picture book market you can afford no 'passengers'. You need fabulous texts and brilliant illustrations, held together with a creative vision that is firm enough to give your list a coherent, instantly recognisable feel, so that booksellers, parents and children all know that a book will be one they will love, and of a quality they can rely on. Every publisher has its own approach and at Little Tiger the whole team works within this ethos that shapes our list.

You also need a list with the flexibility to grow and not become stale. The joy of an independent company such as ours is that we can react quickly and spontaneously to new ideas, or when we see a need to push back the barriers. We spend a great deal of time working with new illustrators to develop their art styles to a standard that will make them a part of and a credit to our list. We're lucky to have a very talented team of designers who give a lot of art direction - looking for illustration that has humour or charm and strong characterisation, and art that will catch the eye and the imagination. Like the texts themselves - and the list itself - the art needs to be accessible, but of top quality, with a huge amount to offer every single reader, no matter what the level of sophistication. We ourselves have to be aware that the decisions we are making should be based on commercial critical judgement rather than just personal taste. The joy and the frustration of picture books is that you can devote a lot of time to working with someone to get to this point. When you get a rough or a colour sample on your desk that makes that breakthrough it is the most exhilarating moment, but sometimes you simply cannot attain this. There are many talented illustrators out there creating wonderful books, but it takes a careful eye to place them in the right environment, within the right list.

Jane Chapman and Tim Warnes both came to Little Tiger straight from college and have developed artwork styles that frequently earn their books a place on the bestseller lists, with strong co-edition sales - and an army of loyal fans of ages three to six to sixty. Established illustrator David Roberts has also worked with us and developed his picture book style, softening the eyes and characterisation, developing a younger colour palette and a younger appeal to his artwork, while losing none of his fabulous quirkiness, wit and observation. *Dirty Bertie* was a real experiment for the Little Tiger list back in 2002, and has gone on to win a number of awards.

Also vital in developing the identity and success of a picture book list is that, because of co-edition sales, the art should appeal broadly, throughout the world: in picture book markets in the United States or Australia, Finland or Japan. A talented and dedicated foreign rights team is your answer. You don't compromise your books by aiming for a lowest common denominator, but develop your knowledge of each country's market, and each co-edition publisher's list, and sell your titles to those publishers whose market and profile they will suit. The challenge for every publisher and every art director is to anticipate what the market will want next, and to keep the focus on the books, and the children themselves. It is vital never to lose sight of the fact that each book should make children smile, make them think, and give them a taste for the wonders of stories and the magical world of illustration and the imagination. If that's what your books do, then you know you have a list to be proud of.

Picture Books Recently Received

Mini Grey, *The Pea and the Princess* (Red Fox 2004). A new take on the familiar story, told here by the pea! Reading the pictures with care alerts the reader to a quite different subtext.

Mini Grey, *Biscuit Bear* (Jonathan Cape 2004). The clever title character ensures his personal survival from those who seek to eat him.

Kes Gray & Nick Sharratt, *You Do!* (2003), *Yuk!* (2004), and *If I was Boss* (2004) (Bodley Head & Red Fox) Three more in the saga of Daisy, the little girl who doesn't eat peas and knows how to remind adults of their deficiencies.

ACCIO 2005: The UK's first-ever Harry Potter Conference

Al Hewson, Conference Chair, writes: "We are pleased to announce that Accio 2005 will take place over the weekend of 29-31st July 2005 at the University of Reading." Accio 2005 will bring together academics and adult Harry Potter fans to discuss all aspects of J.K. Rowling's Harry Potter books. Planned events include presentations, panels, speeches, games, a feast, and informal discussions into the small hours.

All residential memberships will include all meals for the event, and non-residential membership will include everything apart from bed and breakfast and there's an early-bird discount if you register before Halloween!

Further details can be found at <http://s95170296.onlinehome.us>

"The Pictures tell us far more than the words do"

Two of Anthony Browne's picture books

Bridget Carrington

Since his first book, *Through the Magic Mirror* (1976), Anthony Browne has illustrated more than forty others, of which about a third have had texts by other authors. In a lecture tellingly entitled 'Let the Pictures Tell the Story,' given in Madison, Wisconsin in November 2000, Browne speaks of his own realization of the difference in his approach when in 1981 he first illustrated a text he had not written himself, the Grimm Brothers' story *Hansel and Gretel*. Browne asserts, 'This was the first time I had to design and think why I was doing them. I was designing and thinking how the pictures would help to tell the story. Before, the strange or funny things in the background were there to make the book more interesting to the child reader and indeed to myself.'

This experience made Browne more aware of the power of illustration; since then he has actively sought to unify design and thought in an attempt to ensure that 'the pictures tell us far more than the words do.' In his lecture and in his actual work, Browne makes a distinction between books where the text is his own, and those he has illustrated for other authors. It is interesting therefore to look at two books, *The Visitors who came to Stay* (1984), with text by a friend of his, Annalena McAfee, and his own *The Changes* (1990). In the lecture, he talks of his first reaction: 'When she first showed it to me I didn't know how I could illustrate it: it's really just about feelings. Because I knew Annalena we were able to discuss it. I didn't know how to tell this story in pictures; nothing visual seemed to happen... [but] as the paintings developed she could change the words, and as the words changed I could change the pictures. It was as though I was writing and illustrating the book myself: it had more of a natural feel to it.'

The Visitors who Came to Stay has a much higher proportion of word to picture than does *Changes*. The initial impression created by the pictures illustrating the life of Katy, a little girl being brought up by her father, is of dullness and emptiness, implying a lack of vitality in their lives, which are spent in a seaside resort empty of other humans. When Katy is shown eating her breakfast, she sits in an overprotective environment, backed by the bar-like stripes on the wallpaper, shut in by the bar-like window frame in a perfectly bricked wall, edged by a strictly functional and slightly menacing drain pipe, and all protected by a burglar alarm. The drab safe routine of Katy's life is broken when her father introduces his new girlfriend, Mary. She and her son Sean are brightly coloured, smiling, dressed in clothing quite unlike Katy's dark, conservative garments. A chair rises from the floor in surprise - a surprise echoed by Katy's teddy bear, the clock, the cat (beating a retreat from Sean's dog), and the ornamental flying seagulls, one of which has become alive. One section of the bookcase has become an open window, revealing a brightly sunlit scene beyond the darkness of Katy's

present existence. In the text McAfee indicates Sean's love of practical jokes, while Browne's pictures reveal a far greater range of visual jokes which complement the author's words. The jokes, however, begin to perturb Katy, and Browne shows not merely what is different, but why Katy feels things are wrong, with surrealistic touches which further emphasize disorder. The empty seaside seen earlier is now full of colour, life and incongruity, where buses pass on the horizon of the sea and sharks cut through the sand. As the story goes on, Katy's father at first removes Mary from his life, with the result that the emptiness reoccurs, but ultimately, Katy decides to enter Sean's world of practical jokes, which no longer threaten but offer another dimension to her life. The collaboration of Browne and McAfee has resulted in a powerful reinforcement of word by picture and picture by word.

Browne says, 'I like the gap between the words and the pictures ... that gap is filled by the imagination of the child reading the book, who puts things together ... works things out.' When he collaborates closely with another writer in the production of word and image, the gaps become very important; when he is writing and illustrating his own work, these gaps are the book's message.

In *Changes*, Browne developed this surreal psychoanalytical approach in order to address the issue of a child awaiting the birth of a sibling. He describes *Changes* as 'a very strange book and a very unusual book for me,' because, as he said in an interview with Janet Evans, 'I knew the beginning, I knew the end, but I didn't know what was going to happen in between.' He started with the image of a boy staring at an electric kettle which is changing into a cat. This forms the first illustration in the book, with text, 'On Thursday morning at a quarter past ten Joseph Kaye noticed something strange about the kettle.' The kettle develops a tail and ears, then the cat's head and paws appear. Succeeding pictures include many birds, which may serve as clues for the reader as to the meaning of Joseph's father statement that things are going to change. Browne admits to being angry when his American publishers insisted that the surprise at the end of the book (the arrival of Joseph's parents with his new baby sister) should be detailed in the blurb; this, he felt, destroyed the element of fearful anticipation (the 'gaps') that Joseph, and the child reader gain by the juxtaposition of the sparse text with the surreal illustration, 'gaps' that Browne considers so important.

A major difference between Browne's work with McAfee and in *Changes* is that in the latter he can develop these background stories to a much greater extent than within even an obviously close collaborative authorship.

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The Middle Child as a Picture Book Character

Pam Robson

Picture book authors and illustrators frequently take on themes which have significance in the lives of the children who form their primary audience. Two books which do this very effectively are Mary Hoffman's *Nancy No-Size* (1995; illustrated by Jennifer Northway) and Holly Keller's *Maxine in the Middle* (1989). The central characters of both books are of pre-school age and both are the middle children in their families. Keller's anthropomorphic picture book in cartoon style features a family of rabbits, while Hoffman and Northway's, in realistic style, uses human characters within a mixed ethnic context, depicting a middle child of mixed race with a white father and a black mother.

Keller's choice of rabbits allows children to enjoy the depiction of small empathetic animals, living in a house like any ordinary family of humans. The text, a narrative in the third person, with dialogue, is in large bold print. The words are mostly positioned beneath the framed artwork. Most of the shadowless, flat cartoon style illustrations are framed by thin black borders. The alliterative title alerts readers to the content. Maxine's predicament in the family is suggested visually in the cover illustration by the actions of her siblings on either side; her brother looks up at Maxine and smirks behind his hands at what is about to happen to her, while her sister looks up at the tip of one of Maxine's long ears, where a butterfly sits. She holds a butterfly net aloft and is obviously about to trap the butterfly beneath it. Thus Keller makes Maxine the focus of attention and indirectly a source of amusement to her siblings. Maxine stands hands on hips between them, looking slightly bemused. On the title page, Maxine is depicted encircled by the joined hands of her siblings; she is quite literally in the middle. All three are shown smiling; Maxine appears to be enjoying their shared game, perhaps giving a hint that all will be well eventually.

The book concentrates solely upon the issue of sibling rivalry; the anthropomorphism avoids any problems of culture and ethnicity. The iterative third person narration spans a period of months between the start of the school year and Christmas. Various incidents within the family cause Maxine to grow increasingly angry at being the middle child; finally she withdraws from the family home and retires into the tree-house. Then her siblings begin to miss her so much that they persuade her to return by preparing a party for her. Mama brings to the party a selection of food conveying the lesson that middle things are the best. Finally the three siblings are shown covered with a quilt which symbolises the warm parental care enjoyed by all three, regardless of birth order. The negativity contained in the alliterative wording of the title *Nancy No-Size* hints at a central character diminished in some way. A realistic front cover

illustration serves to highlight Nancy, the middle child of a mixed race marriage. She stands on the right and her mother kneels at her side, dressing her, but the tights she is holding are obviously too small. In the background is Nancy's older sister; both she and her mother are much darker than Nancy. Half concealed between Mother and sister is Nancy's fair-skinned baby brother. Nancy becomes the focus of attention because Mother and older sister both look towards her. It quickly becomes apparent that Nancy's role as the middle child is not the only issue in this title. The title page carries a small illustration of Nancy and her baby brother. Since both wear only underwear their differing skin tones are again the most obvious feature. Nancy grimaces as she deflects a blow delivered by the baby, who holds a rattle. On the first page Northway shows a group of small children of various ethnic origins playing happily together on the pavement. In the centre of the illustration, at the vanishing point of the angle of perspective, Nancy sits astride a huge bicycle whilst her older sister tries to support her. The story begins: 'Once there was a girl called Nancy. She wasn't a big girl. She was too small to ride her sister's bike.' This fairy tale echo conveys a hint of Nancy being a non-person, a Cinderella-like character. Nancy is described in negative terms, so that the absence of positive information about her intrigues the reader, who learns only what Nancy cannot do. As well as being too small for the bike, she is too big for her baby brother's rocking horse. In fact she is no size at all.

However, Hoffman and Northway have conspired to provide something of a subtle ironic message. Whilst the negative text concentrates upon Nancy's perceived inadequacies, there is much positive action going on in the background, so that the illustrations frequently 'say' something quite different from the text. The secondary characters in Nancy's family are used in the pictures to convey an ironic message to the reader. The third person narrator describes only Nancy's viewpoint, thus providing an unreliable narration. Text and pictures together create a subtle 'ironic relationship; the gap between them is a gap between the subjective and the objective. Nancy's perception of her world is different from the perceptions of those around her. Nancy cannot do things because she is either too short or too tall, too old or too young, neither dark nor fair, neither first nor last, neither straight nor round. At the same time, bustling family activity continues in the background, as her family have been preparing a party for her. Just as Nancy prepares to explode with anger, she is forestalled by loud cries of 'Happy Birthday!' from her parents. At this point in the story the narration becomes positive in tone: 'She is Nancy-shaped and Nancy-coloured. And her place is right in the middle of her family.' Northway's

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The Playful Power of Collage in Lauren Child's Picturebooks

Posey K. Furnish

Although there is a proud tradition of collage in American children's literature, British picturebooks have not historically embraced collage as a means of illustration. American authors Eric Carle and Ezra Jack Keats both employed this technique in creating the illustrations for their books over 30 years ago. While their books (and others') enjoy an enduring success in England, it wasn't until Lauren Child's first book, *Clarice Bean, That's Me*, that collage, both its power and playfulness, came back to the consciousness of readers and critics alike.

Collage as an artistic medium is less than 100 years old, having been introduced as a fine art by Picasso and Braque in 1909 and developed throughout the 20th century. It is a technique that incorporates fragments of printed paper into compositions and has now come to mean a material fixed to a surface that creates a picture. As experienced readers, adults freely accept collage as a form but what does collage hold for the developing child reader?

Lauren Child's success as an illustrator lies in the balance she achieves between playfulness and the power of recontextualisation. By challenging the concept of a child's understanding of an object and introducing a puzzle-like feel to every picture, she offers her reader the opportunity to engage with the visual story on a higher level. The use of thick black lines and imperfect borders enables the reader to recognise that the picture has been constructed not by putting pen to paper but rather, by piecing it together. As visual imagery in other media increases in its sophistication, Child's decision to remind her reader that each picture was 'made' flies in the face of the sophistication children have come to expect and therefore offers a balance of another kind.

In *My Uncle is a Hunkle* (Orchard Books, 2000), Child allows her reader to make the easy leap towards understanding the use of collage by putting landscape photography in as a background—a classic aspect—but then expands

on this by introducing fabrics and textures in both expected (Clarice's dress) and unexpected (background to Mum's rules) places. This transgression against the norm opens up a playfulness that a reader can quickly access and enjoy. It also speaks to one's imagination as there is an unspoken challenge (or game, in my experience!) to the reader to notice and recognise how each page is constructed.

That Pesky Rat (Orchard Books, 2002) also makes use of photographic imagery in several of its backgrounds, which lends to the plight of the main character. What is interesting about the use of collage in this book is how it successfully endears the reader to the main character—a rat. By being given a consistent fur texture throughout and alongside most of the other pets, the rat is elevated from its archetypal role of dirty vermin to a warm, loving creature not unlike the other cute animals in the book.

... "what does collage hold for the developing child reader?"

Child also introduces commercial imagery in expected places, as in *That Pesky Rat* when the racing that Grandad is watching on TV is a photograph of a horse race. Rather than weakening by not continuing to challenge the reader's understanding, these types of 'pauses', or images that allow children to 'catch their breath,' can ultimately strengthen their engagement with the story and build confidence in their understanding.

Of course it doesn't hurt that more than being just clever puzzles or visual literacy aids, these and other titles by Child tell rollicking and hilarious stories replete with a cast of recognisable characters—bossy big sisters, silly uncles, grumpy old ladies—which also serves as a safety net for the less experienced reader whose engagement with the imagery may be less confident. It is this playfulness and attention to structure that, as with all good symmetrical picturebooks, cause the reader to come away from a Lauren Child picturebook with a sense of achievement for having read more than just the words.

Hans Christian Andersen Awards 2004

The winners of the Hans Christian Andersen Awards 2004 were announced at the Bologna Book Fair in April. **Martin Waddell** (Ireland) is the winner of the 2004 Hans Christian Andersen Author Award and **Max Velthuijs** (The Netherlands) is the winner of the 2004 Hans Christian Andersen Award for Illustration. In choosing Martin Waddell for the author award, the jury has paid tribute to the remarkable perception, compassion and warmth of this prolific writer. Waddell writes for young people of all ages with simplicity, empathy and respect: he recognizes and articulates the complexities of ordinary lives and illustrates the need of those lives to be protected and understood. He is well known as the author of many picture books published by Walker Books, notably *Can't You Sleep, Little Bear?* and its sequels, illustrated by Barbara Firth, and *Owl Babies*, illustrated by Patrick Benson. His earlier books for older children, such as the trilogy which began with *Starry Night*, were originally published under the pseudonym Catherine Sefton but have now been reissued under his own name. Recent books for teenagers include *Tango's Baby*.

Max Velthuijs is a brilliant storyteller and artist whose lifetime dedication to children's literature has been recognized by the jury. Velthuijs has proven many times over that he understands children: their doubts, fears and exhilarations. His books are little jewels of image and text that come together to comfort children and reassure them as they venture out into the world around them. His books featuring Frog and his friends are published in the UK by Andersen Press.

Martin Waddell was selected amongst 26 authors nominated for the award. The other finalists were Barbro Lindgren (Sweden), Bjarne Reuter (Denmark), Joel Rufino dos Santos (Brazil) and Jürg Schubiger (Switzerland). Max Velthuijs was selected amongst 27 illustrators nominated for the award. The other finalists were Rotraut Susanne Berner (Germany), Roberto Innocenti (Italy), Javier Serrano (Spain), Grégoire Solotareff (France). The Awards will be presented to the winners at the opening ceremony of the IBBY Congress in Cape Town, South Africa in September.

IBBY UK Annual General Meeting

Ann Lazim, Chair

The 2004 AGM of the British section of IBBY took place on April 1st at the Centre for Literacy in Primary Education where members were able to view the 2002 IBBY Honour List as well as look around CLPE's extensive library of children's books. Most of the existing committee were prepared to continue and the meeting approved their re-election. Roy Flowers and Chris Lewis-Ashley stood down and their places were taken by Marilyn Brocklehurst and Bridget Carrington. The remainder of the committee is as follows (in alphabetical order): Fiona Collins, John Dunne, Posey Furnish, Nikki Gamble, Jo Hodder, Chris Kloet, Elizabeth Laird, Ann Lazim, Pat Pinsent, Pam Robson, Ed Zaghini. Members were reminded that it is possible to be co-opted during the year and two present committee members joined this way last year.

The main business consisted of reports from treasurer Pam Robson and Ann Lazim as chair. Ann outlined the previous year's activities, including the successful November conference. Pat Pinsent was thanked for her central role in organising this, and for her continuing editorship of IBBYLink. A new membership leaflet has also been produced, thanks to an Arts Council grant, for which Pam was active in applying. During the year the committee completed a questionnaire from IBBY HQ about activities of the international organisation. The new Executive Director, Kimete Basha, is keen that IBBY should facilitate communication between members worldwide. To that end, we have been asked to provide contact details of all our members. The committee has discussed this and concluded that the Data Protection Act in this country prevents us from forwarding this information. The AGM also felt the same way. This is a matter to which we will need to return. It has been suggested that we try to collate information about what proportion of members belong to particular professions associated with children's literature, so that the international organisation can at least build up a general picture about our membership. The section has also responded to a consultation document from the Arts Council about a strategy for children's literature.

Several committee members are planning to attend the IBBY congress in South Africa in September and Ann Lazim's name has been put forward as a candidate for the Executive Committee.

Following the AGM, we were delighted to welcome South African illustrators Niki Daly and Jude Daly, guest speakers who took part in a "conversation session" chaired by Chris Kloet.

War & Peace in Children's Literature: A Cross-Cultural Literary Experience

Annemie Leyson and Carol Fox

For four years, from 1996 to 2000, teacher trainers in three European countries, Belgium (Flanders), Portugal and the UK, collaborated on a project funded by the EU Socrates programme, with the aims of collecting, translating and disseminating literature for children and young adults around the topic of war and peace, and to develop teaching materials.

As children's war literature seemed to be strikingly multi-generic we produced an anthology of extracts from picture story books, comic stories, novels, diaries and plays and also collected poems and short stories mainly from our own literatures and some from German or French literature. Each extract had to be translated into the three languages of the project partners, thus introducing literature previously unavailable to young readers, especially in Britain, where translations from other languages are rather rare

Since the dawn of writing, war has been a fruitful context for literature. Although it may appear to be a grim and rather adult affair which parents and educators might regard as unsuitable for young readers, from the *Iliad* to today's interpretation of 9/11 by Art Spiegelman, war has been the oldest theme of literature proper, presenting humanity in both its greatest and most barbaric forms. Moreover children are constantly exposed to war and violence, either because they are involved in war situations themselves, or come across the concept in sensational and sometimes harmful ways that can most certainly be counteracted by the experience children's books offer their readers.

While we, as a project group, understand that it is of paramount importance to give children a historic perspective on the conflicts of the twentieth century, we did agree that the power of imaginative literature can help children think about war through the virtual experiences and powerful images provided by stories and poems. Reading may have them entering the terror of First World War trench warfare, becoming the young girl who waves good-bye to a Georgian soldier on the Dutch island of Texel at the end of World War Two, hiding out in the forests outside Warsaw with the Polish partisans after the fall of the Warsaw ghetto, facing the Flemish dilemma of choosing for collaboration with the Germans or for joining the resistance, or journeying from Bosnia to Croatia with young refugees from the recent war in former Yugoslavia.

Readers will find many more conflicts in books, taking the characters to lands as far apart as Kazakhstan, Mozambique, Iraq and Northern Ireland. New

children's books on recent terrorist attacks and the latest conflicts are, without any doubt being written and published right now.

By dwelling inside the minds and hearts of characters, usually ordinary people rather than the political and military leaders of history texts, literature helps to imagine what it felt like, what its effects were on ordinary human beings and how things might have been. This in turn opens up the possibility of profound and complex reflections about who we are and how we, as nations and individuals, come to be what we are. The cross-cultural aspect of the project involved not only the fact that we were a group with three contrasting European cultures, languages and historic backgrounds. Some concepts, such as the English *war efforts* seemed hard to translate into Dutch or Portuguese. All of us had heard different stories about WW2 from our parents and grandparents. Working together also sharpened our insight into the narratives of war each of our countries feel they must relate. The books themselves inevitably drew in themes around cultural conflict. More often than not, the texts developed ideas around stereotypes, nostalgia, exclusion, otherness, cultural domination, religious belief, and, of course, national identity (not to be confused with nationalism).

We noticed remarkable differences in literary approaches, styles and subjects. Because of its subject matter, war literature is often unusually original and complex in its structures, teaching young readers not only to read between and beyond the lines but also teaching older readers how ideologies colour the representation and transmission of great events. We discovered that while Belgium and the UK share a common, be it diverse, interest in the battles of World War I in Flanders, our perspectives on the second World War are quite different; many stories in English tell of children involved in bombings, evacuation to the countryside, and the fate of refugees, while stories in Dutch/Flemish tell of occupation, collaboration and resistance, being in hiding and the persecution of the Jews. In contrast to both, for historic reasons and as a result of dictatorial censorship, Portuguese children's literature is comparatively aloof from both wars, and tends to focus on underground literature, more distant colonial history and more recent colonial wars.

(NB: This article was drawn from a presentation at the conference on Children's Literature and War held at Roehampton on 1 May 2004. For a list of the illustrations discussed, please contact the editor.)

A Visit to the Quentin Blake Exhibition

June Hopper

One of the most enjoyable art exhibitions I have ever attended was that held recently in the Gilbert Collection at Somerset House in the Strand, to celebrate the work of Quentin Blake, the first Children's Laureate. As I am sure any Blake fan would agree, the drawings, paintings and book illustrations were terrific, and what also made this a particularly memorable occasion was the fact that it was attended by as many children as adults. This was a great opportunity for children to see the original drawings of characters from some of their favourite books, and there were excited cries of 'Oooh look! It's Matilda,' and 'There's the B.F.G.!' which added to the informal and happy atmosphere.

When Blake was interviewed on BBC Radio 4 the week that the exhibition opened to the public, he said that his aim had been to make the display as informal and approachable as possible. His work was simply mounted on black walls which showed the colourful images to their full advantage, and in what I feel was an added informal touch, he had handwritten in pencil on the wooden bases inside the glass display cabinets the details and comments relating to each piece on show.

There was a lot to see in a fairly small area. Visitors of all ages took their time to study the details of these spiky-looking drawings, the children sometimes explaining to accompanying adults the stories behind the pictures. Whether or not one knew the story for which the drawing had been produced, however, did not really matter; it was just fun to look. It was fascinating to see the processes involved in producing an illustration from its inception to its completion, and the final image reproduced on the page of a book. It was interesting to see drawings that had

been 'patched up' because the artist had not been entirely satisfied with them. Also there were his first published drawing, which appeared in *Punch* magazine in 1949, his first set of illustrations for a children's book *A Drink of Water* (1960) by John Yeoman, and his first picture book in full colour, *Patrick* (1968), for which he also wrote the text. A particular pleasure for me was seeing one of his original colour drawings for his wordless, but nevertheless, eloquent, picture book *Clown* (1995), which is, I think, a creative gem.

Besides his drawings for Roald Dahl's children's stories there were also those which were the result of collaboration with authors Russell Hoban and Michael Rosen. There were his illustrations produced for the Folio Society, and cover drawings for *Punch* and *The Spectator*; all showing how Blake's particular style lends itself to a variety of literary genres. As an integral part of the exhibition there was a continuously screened ten-minute video produced by the National Gallery in which Blake explained and demonstrated his working methods. Although younger children found it impossible to sit still for ten minutes, the older ones and adults obviously enjoyed it and I for one sat through it twice.

Picture books and book illustrations, including those on dust jackets, provide us with picture galleries in our own homes, and a visit to an exhibition such as this helps both children and adults to realise what true works of art these books often are.

European Illustrators' Forum at Bologna

Ed Zaghini

The European Illustrators Forum (EIF) is a recently founded network consisting of 13 illustrators' associations from 8 countries, including **Aesopos** (Greece), **Associazione Illustratori** (Italy), **Association of Illustrators** (UK), **Grafill** (Norway), **Illustrators Guild** (Ireland), **La Maison des Illustrateurs** (France), **Svenska Tecknare** (Sweden) and the **Spanish Federation** (FADIP), which includes five regional associations from Madrid, Catalonia, Basque Country, Galicia and Valencia.

Established by Valencia's APIV, its aim is to safeguard illustrators' rights and to promote illustration through coordinated, local action of members associations. It began with the "First Illustrators Transnational Rendezvous" that was held in Valencia in October 2003.

At a press conference on April 16th at the Book Fair Illustrators' Café, the delegation representing the EIF introduced themselves, their objectives, hopes and ideas for possible future projects before signing a constitutive document to signify its official launch. The EIF stand at the Bologna Book Fair was staffed by members and featured promotional materials and contact details for all of the constituent associations.

If you would like to learn more about this exciting new organisation, send an email to ETI@apiv.com

Articles Continued...

EDITOR'S NOTE: Apologies for the need to have a "continuation" page but the pieces received for this issue were so packed with interesting insights and useful information that we decided to run them in their entirety!

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5, (Anthony Browne, B. Carrington)

In *The Visitors Who Came to Stay* Browne employs surreal images to indicate Katy's perturbed and confused feelings; in *Changes* he can concentrate on this form of imagery to describe (as the words are not intended to) the changes which Joseph imagines as he spends his day pondering his father's parting words. Browne therefore changes Joseph's perception of everything, whilst giving the readers (if they will follow them) the clues to establish the nature of the real change. Above Joseph's head is a picture of the Madonna and Child which Joseph cannot see but the reader can. All the familiar household objects seem to Joseph to be changing: the sofa into a crocodile, the armchair into a gorilla, the curtain into a gorilla's hand. The text, unlike McAfee's, is bald and terse; the illumination is supplied by the reader's imagination in filling the 'gaps'. Joseph becomes haggard, shadows beneath his eyes, but the penultimate spread, with the silhouettes of his parents and a full page close up of his new baby sister has a more expansive text than any since the early pages: 'When the door opened, light came in and Joseph saw his father, his mother, and a baby. "Hello, love," said Mum...' The final illustration shows Joseph, on a perfectly normal sofa, holding his sister, surrounded by his parents, their arms placed protectively around him and the new baby. The colours in the picture are rich, Mum's being the deep blue of a Madonna's, and for the first time Joseph's image, although small, looks happy.

The differences which seem to exist between Browne's illustrations for his own text, and for those of other authors are, therefore, largely due to the degree to which he can allow the readers to supply their own interpretation of the text, the illustrations and, to Browne, most important of all, 'the gap between the two.' When he has total authorial control over text and picture, his work can fully express his conviction that 'the pictures tell us far more than the words do.' The pictures in the readers' minds will tell them even more.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6 (Middle Child, Pam Robson)

illustration of the party covers a whole spread in which Nancy is the focal figure. She and her siblings are in a carnivalesque 'time out' situation; they are all dressed up in their party outfits. The older sister is dwarfed, in terms of perspective, because the illustrator positions her behind Nancy's chair. All eyes look towards Nancy; her name appears in the top of her birthday cake and her father focuses his camera upon her. Nancy enjoys her fifth birthday because it has significance for her alone; it is a turning point in her life. Now she has a positive role to play as a school-age child, and she has learned that being in the middle is her place in the family, not no-place. The mixed race marriage is treated as a secondary issue while Nancy succeeds in establishing a sense of identity for herself.

The authors and illustrators of both texts use the medium of the picture book subtly to convey much more than words alone. The words and pictures combine to convey the shifting patterns of power through negotiation that can emerge within a family. This interaction between text and illustrations conveys the transformation of the middle child character that take place once negative perceptions of isolation from the family have been resolved. Picture books have a unique place in making such issues and their resolutions accessible even to the youngest children.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 12 (William Blake, N Crandall)

tame the goblins. As she learns to trust her power, her stance gradually becomes more upright. From a kneeling position, Ida stands and then dances, as she charms the goblins with her wonder horn.

Where The Wild Things Are makes an interesting contrast. This is a far less disturbing book for young children and we can see this simply by reading gesture. Max's posture is always upright. He is never in any doubt that he can command the wild things and neither are we.

Blake wanted his poems to be available to the eye and to the imagination, as well as to the rational mind of his audience. Gesture is readily interpreted by almost everyone, and thus narrative through gesture became a central aspect of his work. Throughout his life, in his painting and writing, he tried to convey his emotional truths in an immediate and accessible way. Quite simply, he knew how to tell stories.

CONFERENCES & EVENTS

28 September 2004, Goethe Institute, London

"EUROTOOLBOX"

This will be a day-long conference to discuss the promotion of European language materials in libraries. The cost will be £40 and details are available from Rachel Kirkwood at the Goethe Institute 020 7596 4025 or via email kirkwood@london.goethe.org

12 October 2004, Centre for Literacy in Primary Education, London

MULTICULTURAL BOOK FAIR

With thousands of children's books published each year, it's not always easy to find those which reflect cultural diversity. Is the number of "multicultural" books increasing or diminishing? Do the books available reflect an inclusive society or is children's literature still largely monocultural? In an event to mark Black History Month, CLPE is hosting a multicultural book fair that will feature a discussion forum led by a distinguished panel to promote dialogue between teachers and publishers about the current state of multicultural publishing. For further information, send an email to ann@clpe.co.uk or visit the website www.clpe.org.uk

13 November 2004, University of Surrey, Roehampton

"THE EXOTIC EAST"

This year's IBBY UK/NCRCL joint annual conference will explore children's literature from and on India, China and other countries. Confirmed speakers will include Jamila Gavin and Mary Cadogan. For more details on attending or submitting a proposal, contact Kim Reynolds at k.reynolds@roehampton.ac.uk

19-21 November 2004, International Youth Library, Munich, Germany

LEARNING ENGLISH THROUGH PICTURE BOOKS

This Conference – the first of its kind – will be based on methodology, results of recent research, and aspects of writing, illustrating and publishing. Speakers include Pat Hutchins, Opal Dunn, and Friederike Klippel. UK sponsors include IATEFL, The British Council, London Metropolitan University, *RealBook News* and several publishers. Further information is available from www.picturebooks.org or OpalD@clara.net

RECENT PUBLICATIONS/PUBLISHING NEWS

NEW EDITORS FOR BOOKBIRD

Bookbird, IBBY's international quarterly, will have new editors from 2005 when Valerie Coghlan and Siobhan Parkinson from Ireland take up the role. They are joint editors of the excellent Irish children's literature journal *Inis*. In an interview in the latest issue of *Bookbird* they signal that they have many ideas for developing the journal, both in terms of content and layout. Valerie and Siobhan are known to many UK IBBY members. Valerie has attended many of our conferences and is involved in many organisations concerned with children's literature and libraries. Siobhan is one of Ireland's most highly regarded children's authors and was guest speaker at the AGM in 2002.

You can subscribe to Bookbird by contacting: Anne Marie Corrigan, *Bookbird* Subscriptions, University of Toronto Press, 5201 Dufferin Street, North York, ON, Canada M3H 5T8. The theme of the current issue is Children's Literature and the Technology Age. The remaining two issues this year will be on Children's Literature and Africa and The Hans Christian Andersen Awards 2004. To subscribe to *Inis*, contact: Children's Books Ireland, First Floor, 17 Lr Camden Street, Dublin 2 or info@childrensbooksireland.com

CO-EDITIONS PLEA - AN UPDATE

We are delighted to report that in response to Elizabeth Laird's plea concerning the foreign language co-editions (IBBYLink Spring 04), Opal Dunn has emailed to say that Yoel Gordon at the International School of London would be delighted to take delivery of books in any language, including picture books, junior fiction and information books. To take advantage of this generous offer, please send any unwanted books to Yoel Gordon, The International School of London, 139 Gunnersbury Avenue, London W3 8LG Tel 8992 5823 or email yogordon@islondon.com. And thank you!!

Don't forget that the next edition of IBBYLink will be devoted to Africa and Children's Books. Contributions welcomed by 31st August, by email (preferably incorporated in the email rather than by attachment) to PatPinsent@aol.com, or to 23 Burcott Rd, Purley, CR8 4AD)