



**The Letterpress Project**

**Author and Illustrator E-Interviews**

# **An Interview With Phil Earle**

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

I wasn't really a reader as a child to be honest. I didn't have the confidence or the concentration span to settle with a book. I did love being told stories though. There was something magnificent about being sat on my dad's knee as he spun me a yarn.

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

At the age of 26 I got a job in a bookshop. Not because I was a reader, just to pay the bills. They made me work in the kids department and shoved a copy of Louis Sachar's HOLES in my hands.

That book is perfect. And it definitely changed my life.

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

Heart. As simple as that. There's nothing as redundant as a book that has nothing of the writer in it.

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

Just me! I always sit down to write the book I would like to read myself.

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

There's no doubt the physical book has a future. Books are furniture.

The way we collect music has evolved because we've always needed a device on which to listen to it. But the book is an entity in itself.

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

I'm not sure I'd class myself as a collector, but I do love my books.

My prized possession is a signed first edition of THE BOOK THIEF, which I was lucky enough to work on during my time at Random House.

I'd love to own a first edition of SE Hinton's THE OUTSIDERS. Or HOLES.