

An Interview with Susanne Seitz

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

I was brought up in Germany and the very first book that I received for my first Christmas from an aunt and uncle is still on my shelf! It is a collection of stories for children called 'Westermann's Kinderbuch'. The stories accompanied me during my childhood and were read to me many times. But what intrigued me most were the somehow creepy, intense, monochromatic illustrations by Karl Voss - the ones you feel might give you scary dreams and you don't really want to look too closely... but then you end up looking even closer!

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

I love making people happy with my art, whether I do whimsical illustrations or a huge painting! I am inspired by nature and the idea that everything is connected, and by colours that I notice everywhere and store away in my brain until they come tumbling out when I start painting.

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

It's the combination of an intriguing story (which sometimes doesn't even need words) and images that allow the readers enough space to unfold their very own imagination.

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

I believe that the 'spark', the moment when you feel attracted by a book, can jump over to anyone, no matter what age, gender, ethnicity....but in general, I like to speak to the child's mind, the one in children and in adults!

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

For me personally, I can't imagine to replace reading digitally with reading physically...not an option...that's why I hope it won't happen to a point of total replacement. The feeling of touching a book, turning the pages, even looking at the cover when it lies on the table....totally irreplaceable!

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

I've been trying to put brakes on myself as I can spend hours in bookstores floating around and wanting to bring everything I like home. I must admit that I am often attracted by beautiful covers....and often I go by instinct when I pick out a book that seems to speak to me...mostly it turns out to be amazing!