



The Letterpress Project

Author and Illustrator E-Interviews

AN INTERVIEW WITH TRACEY CORDEROY

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

The truth is I didn't have many books when I was little. I can, however, remember having *The Ladybird Cinderella* and I read that story time and time again. It's fair to say, I absolutely loved it!

Another early influence was a very old collection of Encyclopaedias we owned. I spent many a happy afternoon dipping into these and especially looking at early fairy tale illustrations and the flags!

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

I have always loved story and how it can take you out of the here and now. When I was primary school teacher my various classes used to really value storytime, probably because I did, and we shared many truly wonderful stories. I used to think then that it would be wonderful, one day, to write my own stories, and then one day I stopped thinking about it and actually gave it a go!

I also saw how powerful a story, or a series of stories, can be when my own daughters lived through the *Harry Potter* series being written. Now I want to write the sort of stories that become real favourites too. The sort with characters that you really care about.

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

It's one that you can escape into. It takes you away; out of the here and now. For a space of time it, quite magically, becomes your everything.

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

Yes, I always have my audience in the back of my mind when I write. I need to know who my story is for as well as what it's saying. I think that allows me to shape the story with a sense of my reader in mind and hopefully this helps me not become too self-indulgent.

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

All I know is that there's a special connection when you open a physical book. The start of a journey, the beginning of a shared adventure. Nothing can really match it I think. Sometimes I pick up a book I, perhaps, haven't read for decades and it's like revisiting an old friend; one that you know very well, but one that has *fresh* news to share too.

Q6. Are you a book collector?

I am a collector of all sorts. In fact I find it hard to let things go. This very much applies to my collection of books. There are old favourites, new favourites, and books that my children and I have had wonderful times sharing together. I am always thinking, "Hmmm, I think I need another new bookcase!" Such is my inclination to hold onto these special treasures...