



The Letterpress Project

Author and Illustrator E-Interviews

An Interview With Tracy Gunaratnam

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

*My earliest memories of books has to be learning to read with the Janet and John "look-and-say" books. These were very popular in the 1950's & 60's. My favourite book as a child and the one that truly sparked my imagination was, *The Tiger Who Came to Tea* by Judith Kerr. I still love that book today.*

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

My children inspired me. I really enjoyed making up stories for them. Their favourite was about a duck in a chocolate factory. Although I didn't write it down at the time it is still fondly remembered.

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

A successful book has to hold the audience's attention and stimulate their imagination. It should be delightful, funny, exciting and/or scary. And of course it doesn't hurt to have a great title and an eye catching front cover for shelf appeal.

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

While I enjoy writing picture books for a young audience I also try to add some small touches that appeal to the adult reader too. After all they may have to read the same book over and over.

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

I very much hope that physical books are here to stay. I can't imagine a world without them or libraries for that matter.

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

I have a large collection of picture books. Wonderful stories and beautiful illustrations are hard to resist. I'm sure my collection will continue to grow.

There is one book I would love to own. I did in fact own it as a child and spent many hours looking over its pages. It was a non-fiction children's encyclopedia with lots of wonderful facts and ideas. I can't remember the title or the year so there's no point trying to find it. I might come across it in a charity shop one day. Fingers crossed.