



The Letterpress Project

# An Interview With Catherine MacPhail

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

*It has to be Little Women. A book about four sisters, and one of them wants to be a writer. I was one of four sisters, and I wanted to be a writer. No wonder I loved it. Even tried to call my mother, Marmee, for a while. But my sisters were having none of it!*

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

*Reading, and going to the cinema. Still my favourite pastimes. But I never read a book, or saw a film and didn't want to change something in it. And once you change one thing in a story, you have a completely new story. So I think that was me realising that is what I wanted to do.*

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

*For me, without doubt, a rattling good story.*

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

*Well, when I get an idea, I do think, 'how would a 12 year old boy/girl handle this problem?' so I suppose I do have a specific audience in mind, though what I always want to do, is write a rattling good story that anyone can read and enjoy. It was with great pride my book, Grass, won the Adult Choice Lancashire Book Award!*

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

*Never. You can't flick back the pages in an e book, which I love doing, especially if it is a murder mystery and I'm checking how I missed a clue. I'm always running out of charge on my kindle. Never happens with a paperback. And best of all, the smell of a book. There's no smell from an e book.*

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

*I've got so many books, they're all over my house. And though I have copies of this book, it would be so special to have a first edition of *The Strange Case of Dr Jeckyll and Mr Hyde*.*