



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*.*