



The Letterpress Project

Author and Illustrator E-Interviews

An interview with Tanya Landman

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

I fell in love with books long before I learned to read. My mother used to read to us all the time and I loved getting lost in different worlds. I think the book that had the most impact on me when I was small was **Where the Wild Things Are**. I used to lie in bed practising staring without blinking once and hoping for an ocean to tumble by.

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

A lifetime of reading probably! I hadn't actually planned on being an author – I just woke up one morning with the first line of the story that became **Waking Merlin** running through my head. It seemed to have come from nowhere.

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

Books and illustrations can make you see and understand the world in a new and different way. The books that I really love have made me feel as though I'm a slightly different person at the end of it to the one I was at the beginning.

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

I think like a lot of authors I'm writing for the child I was and telling the stories I wish I'd been told as a child or teenager.

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

E books are fantastically useful when travelling, and it would be great to see school textbooks go into electronic format (I hate seeing students struggling along carrying these MASSIVE bags on their backs!). But nothing ever can or will replace the sheer magical joy of a real, physical book.

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

Oh yes. I worry that the weight of books on my shelves will make the house implode one day! There are plenty of printed books that I'd love to own, but what I'd really like is to get my hands on are the notebooks and sketchbooks of various writers and illustrators - Maurice Sendak, for example. It would be so intriguing to see the thought processes and trace the development of ideas and characters...