



The Letterpress Project

An Interview With Lee Thomas

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

I had a tough childhood, and books were my saving grace. I remember reading a car manual avidly when I was about 7- there were no other books to hand at the time! My favourite possession was a hardback volume of the Paddington stories. I have never been so proud of something I owned.

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

Writing is something I've always done- or, at least, I've always been a story-teller. Greek mythology fascinated me as a young child, so it feels fitting that my first book is about a Gorgon.

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

Disappearing into the blissful hole of somebody else's world.

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

I always tell rough versions of my stories to my seven year-old daughter, Ayla, so I suppose she is the audience I think about captivating. If it's not a great story, she

interrupts me to sing the 'Poo Poo Song'. If she listens attentively, I know I might be on to something.

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

It is difficult to think that people won't miss the sense of pride, love and excitement that comes with the ownership of a physical book. In the same way that records have continued to have their place for the music aficionado, so physical books will continue to be cherished by those who love reading.

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

My home is stacked with books, they're why my house is a home. I once went to a film director's house. She had an enormous lounge, which was decked out like a Victorian library, replete with those moveable ladders to reach the highest shelves. It was the cosiest living room I have ever been in. In terms of books I'd love to own, I wish I still had that same copy of the Paddington stories that gave me so much joy when I was little.