



The Letterpress Project

Author and Illustrator E-Interviews

An Interview With Sara Lamerton

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

My earliest memory is of my grandmother reading me *The Secret Garden* and then pestering her to read it again and again! I always loved mysteries and particularly ones involving precocious young women who didn't know their place. Obviously, I must've heavily identified with them! Later on, one of my favourite books was called *Room 13* by Robert Swindells. I revisited it as an adult and, although the same magic wasn't there as a child, I certainly took inspiration from some of its themes and motifs for my own work.

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

A simple desire to do it. No logical reason for it, really. I don't come from a literary background. I was generally good at English but not a bookworm or anything. However, my intuition knew that I wanted to create something and after working with teenagers and dabbling in teaching the creative writing process, I found myself drawn to the idea. It wasn't until years later that that idea blossomed into a drive to move forward and throw myself into the process.

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

For me, the stories I gravitate towards are those with intrigue; ones with heart and soul; ones that keep the reader guessing. As well as characters who are complex and interesting, who are misunderstood or challenge themselves and others to overcome adversity.

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

I have a lot of experience working with young people, so this was a natural fit for me in terms of storytelling. I love how creative and experimental you can be with younger audiences, but these stories do have a broader appeal with older audiences too.

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

I much prefer a physical book to an e-book but think there is a place for both. You can't replace real books with digital versions, but they can compliment one another. I personally love accessing non-fiction work through audiobooks. I have engaged with many authors' creations that I would never have done so if it wasn't for platforms like Audible.

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

Not particularly, no. Although there are many creepy stories I read as a child that I would love to have access to now. My inner pre-teen would love to have the entire Point Horror collection, that's for sure!