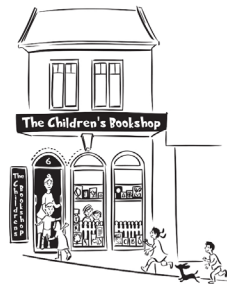


Visualising Stories



With thanks to The Children's Bookshop



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Cover: Clockwise from top: Aura Parker, Tannya Harricks, Beth Macdonald, Liz Anelli, Lorena Carrington

Visualising Stories

24 March to 23 April 2020

I am delighted to introduce *Visualising Stories*, an exhibition showcasing five contemporary female picture book illustrators: Liz Anelli, Lorena Carrington, Tannya Harricks, Bethany Macdonald and Aura Parker.

Most of us have fond memories of picture books and the memory of a picture book is something that stays with us for life. It is often the mood evoked by the illustrations interacting with the text that heightens the emotional impact of the story and allows the narrative to resonate for the reader on more complex levels. The best picture books offer a dynamic interplay between texts and illustrations allowing the reader to engage and find their own connection to the story. Illustrations work on many levels with the text, supporting the narrative, enhancing the narrative and sometimes even offering a necessary dissonance by conveying meaning contrary to the written words.

The illustrators in this exhibition employ a range of artistic processes and media to respond to a text to create engaging stories. The techniques are diverse, including oil on linen, collage, printmaking techniques, photography, watercolour, coloured pencils and more. The wonder of visualising stories is that the artist is able to shape the story and create a unique reading experience that goes beyond words. Words and images unite to offer a rich and rewarding experience for the reader.

This exhibition has taken the artwork from the page and placed it before the viewer in a different context, encouraging the viewer to engage with the original artworks in a gallery environment. I encourage people to go back to the books after viewing the exhibition for a more enriched reading of the stories showcased here.

Paul Macdonald

The Children's Bookshop

March 2020

Liz Anelli

I am passionate about drawing and visual narratives.

‘The words are there to make sure you have understood the pictures.’ Each story deserves a unique artistic approach depending on its mood, subject and intended audience, meaning that my picture books are created with different media and nothing is there by chance. The non-fiction *Nature Storybooks* are a lyrical celebration of Australiana and focus on painted and collaged colour, texture and pattern. Sensitive stories such as *One Photo*, written by Ross

Watkins, call for a mono-printed line that mimics the fragility of illness while reflecting the reprographic subject of photography. Other stories require detailed ink or pencil line with colour and tone digitally orchestrated in layers of collage, paint, printmaking and my own photographic images.

In my studio I have a huge collection of tickets and magazines and delight in repurposing them into complicated scenes. By using collage, particularly packaging, I aim to encourage the viewer to see multiple possibilities for shapes of text on paper. A barcode can become a skyscraper, a sheet of newsprint the feathers of a bird. Most of my illustrations are finished on screen but involve playful paint



Pelicans Flying, 2015
from *Desert Lake* written by Pamela Freeman and illustrated by Liz Anelli
reproduced with permission of Walker Books Australia Pty Ltd

and print techniques before they get to the scanner. I want readers to try and puzzle out how I have made my images and then get exploring with their own art materials.

Alongside children's books I have a thriving business in designing illustrated maps. Originally a project to help me find my bearings, The Maritime Centre Port Map became a special way of telling stories of Newcastle harbourside. Being from another country, I have a unique way of looking at my surroundings. Ordinary things such as street furniture and house designs fascinate me because they are novel and I never grow tired of watching and drawing the amazing Australian birds.

About Liz Anelli

Illustrator/author Liz Anelli has more than 20 children's books published around the globe. In 2012 she and husband Mario left their grown-up children in England to make a new life in Newcastle, NSW. Liz's picture books have been highly recognized with numerous short-listings and awards. Liz spends any spare time drawing and sketches of her new home city often become her much-loved illustrated maps.

Liz is a Board Director of Australia Society of Authors, an Ambassador for Books in Homes and reviews picture books for CBCA. She is represented by Fiona Kensole of Transatlantic Agency, USA.

<https://lizanelli-illustration.com/>



Coming home, 2015

from *One Photo* written by Ross Watkins and illustrated by Liz Anelli
reproduced with permission of Penguin Random House Australia

Lorena Carrington

You might expect an illustrator to always begin their work with a pencil and paper, but I start by going for a walk.

I collect small treasures – leaves, stones, animal bones – and bring them home and photograph them. Sometimes I take my camera. Then, you'll usually find me on my belly, photographing tiny details of fungi or lichen, using a shallow depth of field to push the background into a deep blur. Once I have these elements, the details and the background view, I use Photoshop to weave and layer them together to make a complete illustration.

As an illustrator, I've discovered that one of my favourite things is collaborating with writers. There's such a wonderful thrill in creating something bigger and deeper and more wonderful than you could possibly make alone. Writing tells one story, and images tell another, but together they become alive.

I love working with fairy tales. If you delve beyond the cliché of princesses-in-towers and dragon-fighting-knights, you'll find tales of independent girls and compassionate

boys; stories that reflect the depth of humanity in the history that wasn't necessarily written by the rich and victorious. You'll find stories that explore the relationship between life and death, good and evil, joy and fear, and help us to discover all that lies in between. They show us that without darkness, there is no light. They lead us through life, give us emotional touchstones and help us find parallels in our own experiences. They will be with us forever.

About Lorena Carrington

Lorena Carrington is an internationally published illustrator of middle grade, young adult and adult books. Her fairy tale collection with Kate Forsyth, *Vasilisa the Wise*, received a silver medal in the Readers' Favourite Book Awards. Lorena also exhibits her artwork at commercial and public art galleries, contributes to arts and literary festivals, and has work held in Australian and International collections. She frequently tours schools with presentations and workshops.

<https://lorenacarrington.com/>



Strawberries in the Snow, 2019
photomontage on archival
photographic paper
from *Snow White, Rose Red and
Other Tales of Kind Young Women*,
written by Kate Forsyth and
illustrated by Lorena Carrington
reproduced with permission of
Serenity Press



The Mother's Gift II, 2015
photomontage on archival
photographic paper
from *Vasilisa the Wise* retold by Kate
Forsyth and illustrated by Lorena
Carrington
reproduced with permission of
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Tannya Harricks

My art practice is based in drawing and painting both *en plein air* and in the studio.

My working drawings and studies in mostly pencil, charcoal or gouache are a gathering of observations that inform my studio paintings. In the studio I work in oil on linen or timber panels.

My subject is a visual exploration of a recent field trip or art residency

to a region I am curious about for its unique natural features or world heritage significance. My painting practice is as much about the qualities of the paint as it is about the subject and through bold and lively application of the oil paint, I aim to convey the energy of the subject, whether landscape or figurative.

For illustration commissions I work in a similar way, gathering observational sketches at the source for reference. In the studio these studies become charcoal drawings on primed paper that I then paint over



Nocturnal, 2017

oil and charcoal on paper, 57 x 76 cm

from *Dingo* written by Claire Saxby and illustrated by Tannya Harricks
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with oil paint. My aim with children's book illustrations is to allow the readers' imagination to dig deep into the pictures and create their own narratives that complement the written word.

About Tannya Harricks

Tannya Harricks is a Sydney based artist and illustrator. Her oil paintings, for which she has been awarded the Waverley and Hornsby Art Prizes, have been exhibited in Sydney, New Zealand and Florence. She has also been a finalist in many prominent Australian art awards including the S.A. Waterhouse

Natural History Art Prize, Gallipoli Art Prize and the Gold Coast Art Prize. She has illustrated *Dingo* by Claire Saxby and *Mallee Sky* by Jodi Toering for the Walker Books list. *Dingo*, by Claire Saxby, was joint winner of the Prize for Children's Literature at the NSW Premier's Literary Award (2019); the Royal Zoological Society of NSW's Whitley Award (2018); and was shortlisted in 2019 for the CBCA New Illustrator Award, and Best Picture Book in the Educational Publishing Awards. *Mallee Sky* is shortlisted for the Adelaide Festival Awards for Literature 2020.

<http://tanyaharricks.com/>



Bath Tub, 2018

oil on paper, 56 x 77 cm

from *Mallee Sky* written by Jodi Toering and illustrated by Tannya Harricks
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Bethany Macdonald

Traditional cut and paste collage and painting techniques are fundamental to my art process.

Illustrating *Paperboy*, written by Danny Parker, was a natural extension of my current practice.

Collages are assembled from both found and hand-painted papers, cardboard boxes and painted backgrounds and each illustration was hand-built to reflect the mood and message in Danny Parker's text. Tissue paper that is fragile and rips easily is gradually replaced by stronger, sturdier papers, as *Paperboy* becomes more secure in his world. Shapes that were unstable or precarious become sturdy and solid toward the end of the story as *Paperboy* begins to feel more stability. The tactile illustrations create not only visual interest but serve to heighten the emotions in the text by allowing the reader to feel it is possible to reach out and become part of *Paperboy*'s world.

Creating character and setting was crucial to understanding and connecting with the text. I had to get to know *Paperboy* before I was able to illustrate his world and experiences. What does he look like? Where does he live? What does his house look like?

The colour palette was carefully considered to reflect *Paperboy*'s emotional transition from a state of uncertainty to one of greater security, perhaps even one of hope.

Paperboy is clothed throughout the book in the original draft text that I received from the publisher. It is as if *Paperboy* is wearing his own narrative as he moves through his story. His parents are without features, pushed to the background of the illustrations so, as the drama unfolds, it is *Paperboy* and his personal experiences that remains the single focus of the book.

The illustrations support Danny Parker's text in examining the uncertainty involved in moving house and dealing with changes in life that can feel out of your control. Eventually, *Paperboy* comes to understand more of himself as he begins to embrace change.

About Bethany Macdonald

Bethany Macdonald is a collage artist, painter and printmaker. She graduated from The College of Fine Arts in Sydney and regularly attends painting classes at the National Art School. As Bethany Tucker, she has exhibited her paintings, prints and drawings in solo exhibitions and group shows across Sydney. Bethany also loves to write stories and has just co-written her first picture book *The Hole Idea*. Bethany is currently working on a new picture book she will be both writing and illustrating.



In the Dark, 2019

collage, mixed media

from *Paperboy* written by Danny Parker and illustrated by Bethany Macdonald

reproduced with permission of
Dirt Lane Press



The Glass Heart, 2019

collage, mixed media

from *Paperboy* written by Danny Parker and illustrated by Bethany Macdonald

reproduced with permission of
Dirt Lane Press

Aura Parker

As a designer, artist and writer, I create bodies of work, which are constantly evolving.

My love of stories and the written word fuels my interest in exploring picture books as an art form. My illustrations in watercolour, coloured pencil, pen and digital are whimsical and vibrant, with a playful sense of humour. I especially love the interplay of text and image and continue to be fascinated by the process of carefully crafting the work for emotional impact. Meaning and intention are created when words and pictures work well together and linger in your mind long after you read them.

I visualise the book, like a movie playing out in my mind, and choose moments in time to best tell the story as a sequence of still images. The framing, perspective, even what is left off the page is considered. When articulating an imaginary world in line and colour, I try things here and there, until they feel right, but I always aim to be unexpected. Every subtlety to maximise a character's expression and body language will be worked on until it feels right. It is funny working with insect characters as they have an extra set of limbs to work with – even antennae can be expressive! My characters are a bit like an imaginary child I care deeply about, but they are also a little bit like me, woven with my childhood memories.



Goodnight Glow Worms, 2020
watercolour, coloured pencil, artline pen on watercolour paper
written and illustrated by Aura Parker
reproduced with permission of Penguin Random House Australia

I definitely have young readers in mind and my stories have an early childhood focus. Themes of confidence, resilience, speaking up, strong girl characters and environmental themes keep resurfacing. I gather inspiration from my family, everyday life, the wonder of nature and our beautiful planet. Illustrated stories are powerful; they can make you feel, reflect and imagine a better future, so I suggest you gobble up as many as you can!

About Aura Parker

As an author and illustrator of children's picture books, Aura Parker is known for joyful stories, playful

humour and whimsical watercolour, pencil and pen illustrations. Aura shares her enthusiasm for drawing and reading in visual literacy presentations and illustration sessions, encouraging children to be creative and brave. She shares her process from the exciting first scribbles of ideas to the finished book. In 2020 she introduces her interactive Book Building Blocks, a set of dice designed to add fun and challenge to her presentations. Her books *Goodnight Glow Worms*, *Meerkat Splash*, *Cocoon* and *Twig* are out now.

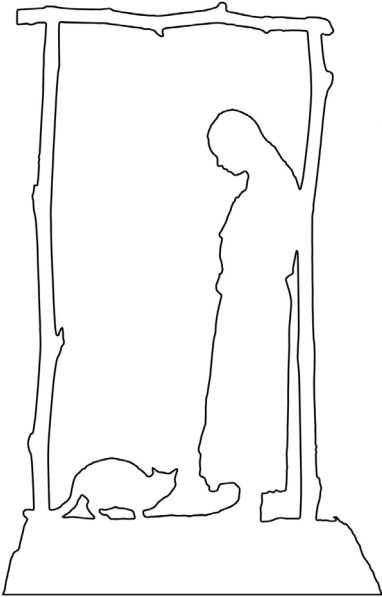
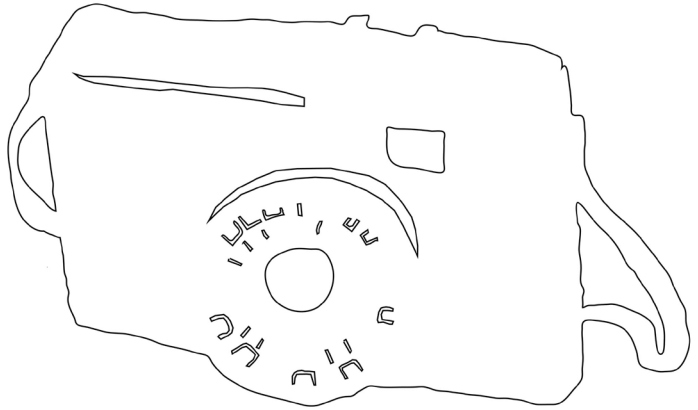
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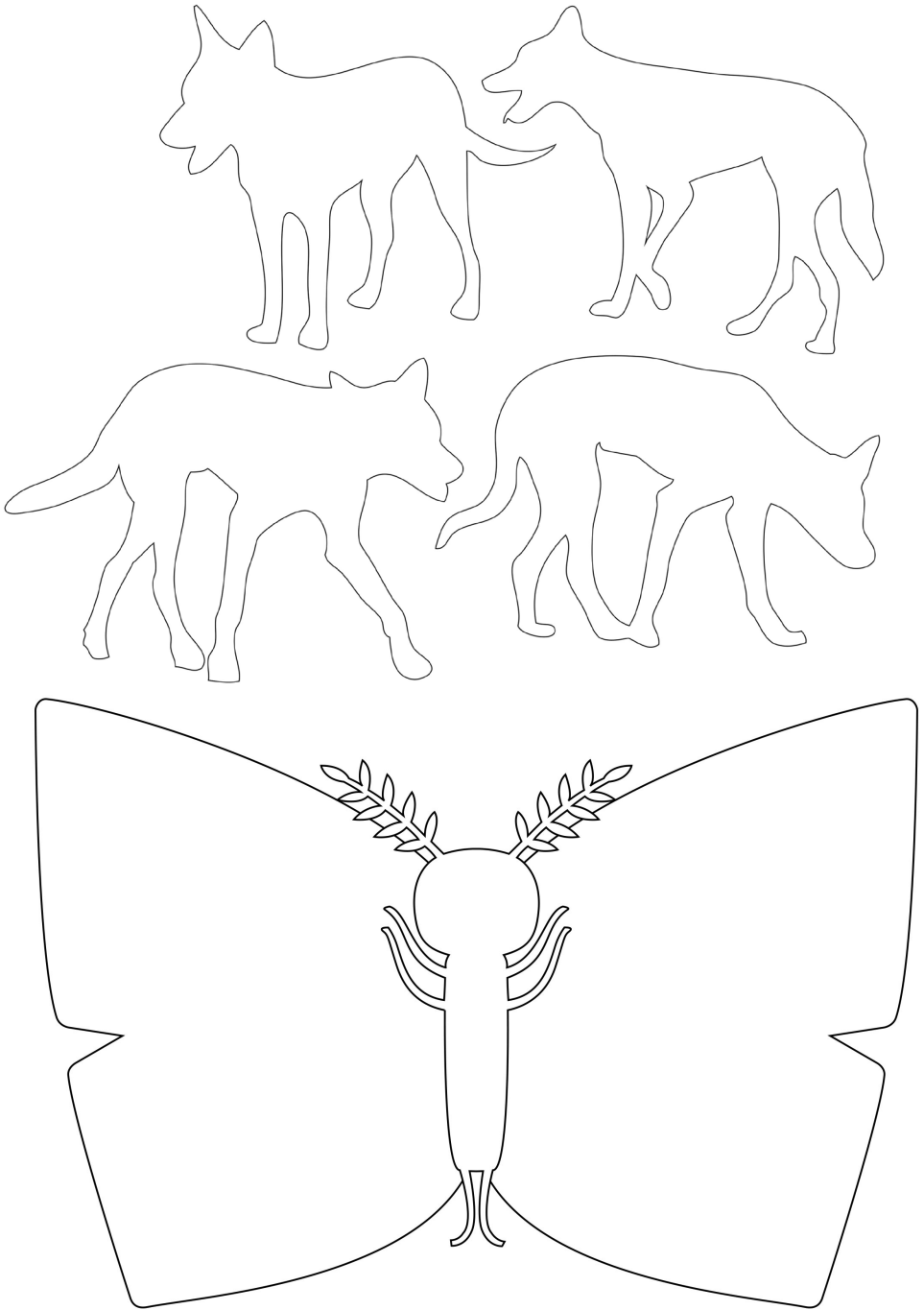


Twig, front endpapers, 2016
watercolour, coloured pencil, artline pen, digital composition
written and illustrated by Aura Parker
reproduced with permission of Scholastic Press

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