

Making Books: Contextualising information

This section outlines conference papers which look at character design in illustration, and the processes of making books.

Using geometric shapes to represent characters in a picturebook: a practice-based exploration, IBBY / NCRCL conference, University of Roehampton (2015)

This paper uses a semiotic framework to examine, from the perspective of an illustrator, the use of minimal information in the visual depictions of characters and their emotions in a picturebook.

In *Picture This* Molly Bang explores using triangles, rectangles and simple colours to depict scenes from the fairy tale *Little Red Riding Hood*. Drawing on this, I made a picturebook, *Sammy the Fish*, in which visual representations of the characters and his environment are based on simple geometric shapes: ovals, rectangles and triangles. The aim was to explore ways of showing Sammy's emotions without using facial expressions: his emotions are implicitly implied by his placement on the page and suggestive use of other visual elements. Through this, Sammy becomes a blank canvas for the reader / viewer to project on to and, potentially, to begin to relate to him.

When working with minimal images, the subtleties and nuances of creative decisions have a greater impact on the artwork. By taking a practice-based approach, this paper describes the process of creating the character and the successful and failed attempts to show his emotive state.

All the Better to See You: Depictions of the Wolf in Little Red Riding Hood, Transmedia UK: Sector by Sector, Bath (2017)

This paper explores depictions of the Wolf in a series of innovative and experimental retellings of the fairy tale 'Little Red Riding Hood'. The author discusses within a semiotic framework how anthropomorphic and abstract illustrations of the Wolf depict its personality and disposition, and how this portrayal of character can be used as a storytelling device.

Europe has a strong tradition of creative illustration and storytelling. Children's publishing is a vibrant industry; the UK market grew 11.7% in 2016 with sales worth approx. £394 million. While digital children's publishing is an emerging area, the children's print market has remained strong in recent years. An aspect of the publishing industry includes the repurposing of existing stories, such as fairy tales. These stories are retold across numerous platforms, from traditional oral delivery, to picturebooks, comics, illustrated books, pop-up books, merchandise and story apps.

In this paper, figurative illustrations of the Wolf such as those by Arthur Rackham (c.1909) are compared with examples dating from a century later, for

example, the woodcuts of Belgian artist Isabelle Vandenabeele (2003) and the animations of Brian Main's 'Lil' Red – An Interactive Story' (2013). These will be contrasted with abstract illustrations, such as Swiss artist Warja Lavater's 'Le Petit Chaperon Rouge' (1965) and Italian graphic designer Bruno Munari's 'Cappuccetto Bianco' (1981).

As fairy tales are familiar narratives, the illustrator has considerable freedom in how they tell the story. While the digital examples discussed in this paper tend towards figurative representations of the Wolf, experimental book illustration demonstrates how simple geometric shapes can be used to paint nuanced characters. This paper shows depictions of the Wolf from the mimetic to the metaphoric and examines how leaving details to the reader's imagination can be an effective tool for storytelling.

Children making picturebooks: creating and curating words and images, Art and Design as Agents for Change, Dublin, Ireland (2017)

Picturebooks are a sophisticated form of storytelling that juxtapose text and illustrations in creative and innovative ways. Studies have demonstrated that reading picturebooks helps children to articulate nuanced and complex images, literally, visually and metaphorically.

This paper explores children's experiences of making picturebooks and how creative storytelling might foster their imagination, understanding and development.

Publishing staff at Bath Spa University run *Make a Little Book* workshops facilitating children's drawing and illustration while taking a hands-on approach to imaginative storytelling.

Children have returned to our workshops in subsequent years with increased confidence and enthusiasm in using book-making to explore the world.

Publishing picturebooks: design and editorial decision-making for a global industry, Synergy and Contradiction, University of Cambridge (2018)

Picturebooks form a significant part of a vibrant publishing industry and make meaningful contributions to culture and education. Within children's literature, the roles played by authors, illustrators and readers of picturebooks have received considerable academic attention. Yet the role of the publisher with regard to the creation and distribution of a picturebook has, arguably, been less thoroughly explored.

UK children's publishing is an internationally successful sector in terms of revenues and innovation. Around 10,000 new picturebook titles are published in

the UK each year, with many of these finding their way into multiple translated, foreign language editions. Buying and selling international rights form a significant aspect of the global children's publishing market. The market for picturebooks differs across countries in terms of the content and style of the books, providing the publisher with complex and nuanced decisions to make when buying rights.

This panel discussion will explore the creative and business decisions a publisher makes when buying rights or commissioning for different markets.

By discussing these titles, the decisions that publishers make on choosing, translating and adapting picturebooks for different markets will be explored. This panel will offer insights into the role of the publisher in the creation and distribution of picturebooks in an international market and question the wider cultural and educational benefits of this.