

Tessa
Yates

BATH - UK



ILLUSTRATOR INTERVIEW

1. What is your technique and medium of drawing and painting?

I paint mostly with gouache and watercolours, and pick out little details with coloured pencil. I love the feeling of drawing on top of paint with crayon.

2. How do you get inspired to produce a piece of artwork?

I am inspired by my own loved experiences and the places and people that mean the most to me, including myself! The painting I made for The Giving World is based on a jungle community in the high Amazon of Peru who are great friends of mine. They make huge magical collective art installations and the way they create happiness together was the inspiration for this piece, as the book is all about artists from all over the world coming together to make a the art collectively. I am on a life mission to be happy, no matter what happens, so I always create art that helps me process a certain challenging situation and enables me to find happiness on it.

3. What artist inspires you?

I love children's book illustrators who make work in a graphic novel style, such as Emily Haworth-Booth. And I love artists who aren't afraid of colour, like David Hockney. Or anyone who paints as if they are a 5 year old having all of the fun, like Emily Powell who's a painter from Devon in the UK.

4. What do you do to overcome a creative block?

I rarely lack creative inspiration, but sometimes find I am reluctant to put pencil to paper if I'm having an "I can't draw" day. The best medicine is setting a 3 minute timer on my phone and sketching the world around me...3 minutes means I don't have any time to think or hesitate and it gets me into the flow of drawing without worrying too much about the result.

5. When did you start illustrating?

I loved drawing as a child, and made lots of comic books and personalized birthday cards for my favourite people. But more recently I started putting real intention behind making picture books in 2018. I went to a workshop about choosing happiness, and chose to start creating a career that would make me happy every day.

6. What does art mean to you?

Art is a way of expressing ourselves. Human emotions are so complex, that art is often the only way we can fully process them and understand ourselves fully. Looking at or experiencing art that others have made allows us to connect as humans, and see how deep down we are all the same.

7. Tell us an unexpected fun fact about you, that might come as a surprise to others.

I am a wild swimmer. I love to start a day of illustrating with a few laps of a lake, a river swim, or a paddle in the sea if there's one nearby. I love meeting other people who swim outside, they're always so friendly, and it's a great place to relax and unwind and loosen up my body before sitting at a desk. I often ponder story ideas whilst I'm in the meditative state of taking stroke after stroke. The rhythm of breathing and putting my face in and out of the water allows me to process any challenges I'm experiencing in work or life and turn them into opportunities.

8. Where are you from and what places would you love to visit one day?

I'm from the beautiful city of Bath in the UK, and have travelled a lot in the Americas. I would love to go to Indonesia one day as I love to surf. I'm getting married next year so perhaps that can be our honeymoon!

