

The University of Tasmania

"THE SHADOW LINE BETWEEN REALITY AND FANTASY":

THE DEVELOPMENT OF FANTASY ILLUSTRATION

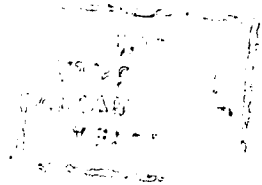
IN

AUSTRALIAN CHILDREN'S LITERATURE

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## ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to show that accompanying a development of book production and printing techniques in Australia, there has been a development in fantasy illustration in Australian children's literature.

This study has identified the period of Australian Children's Book Awards between 1945 - 1983 as its focus, because it encompassed the most prolific growth of fantasy-inspired, illustrated literature in Australia and world-wide.

The work of each illustrator selected for study either in storybook or picture book, is examined in the light of theatrical and artistic codes, illustrative traditions such as illusion and decoration, in terms of the relationships between text and illustration and the view of childhood and child readership. This study has also used overseas literature as "benchmarks" for the criteria in examining these Australian works.

This study shows that there has been a development in the way illustrators have dealt with the landscape, flora and fauna, people, Aboriginal mythology and the evocation and portrayal of Secondary Worlds. After examination of the illustrators identified, this study arrives at the tentative conclusion that Australian illustrators and writers have not created full-blown Secondary Worlds of the kind one typically associates with Tolkien or Le Guin, but they have generally chosen to ride the boundaries between realism and fantasy. The aboriginal writer/illustrator may be excluded from this view because the non-aboriginal audience may perceive the Dreamtime as a Secondary World, whereas for the author/illustrator the Dreamtime has reality.

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These illustrations are not meant as substitutes for the book, but are used merely as a reference for the reader. Due to the constraints of word processing, it has been necessary to place the illustrations at the end of each chapter in which they have been cited.

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## INTRODUCTION

Nearly two centuries have seen a development in Australia of a vigorous and individual tradition in children's book illustration. No particular style can be identified as common to all, but I believe the best of our children's books have been inspired by fantasy. Saxby states, "Fantasy is a rare quality and not merely a literary form but, a way of looking at the world."<sup>1</sup>

We have certainly been influenced by the great English tradition of fantasy in children's stories and illustration, from Dot and the Kangaroo (1913) followed by the books of Ida Rentoul Outhwaite, Norman Lindsay, May Gibbs, the Duracks, the imaginative tradition leads right up to the fantasies of Patricia Wrightson and the rich array of modern picture books by authors such as Ron Brooks and Peter Pavey. Not all artists and authors possess the ability to create the images of fantasy that will adequately communicate their imaginative experiences. There are signs that can alert readers to the possibility of the existence of fantasy. We use stories and illustrations to make sense of the world, and to feel at home in it compensating in dreams for what we are denied, putting to rights what we feel is crooked, reordering experience the better to accommodate it.

This dissertation sets out to survey historically and critically, from an artistic and literary point of view, the work of Australian children's book illustrators. Particular emphasis will be placed on the post World War II to the 1983 Australian Book Award period, to bring out the characteristics and preoccupations of Australian fantasy.

This period as a whole has been selected deliberately, for it witnessed a considerable expansion in the publishing of works in this genre and the emergence of a number of notable works by a new generation of Australian writers and illustrators. This study will attempt to show that Australian authors and illustrators have chosen to ride the boundaries of realism and fantasy rather than create the secondary worlds of the kind produced by such authors as Tolkien and Le Guin.

The study of Australian children's book illustration is a relatively new field of research. H. M. Saxby's study, A History of Australian Children's Literature Volumes 1 (1969) and 11 (1971) thoroughly examines Australian books for children from 1841 to 1970 and briefly examines Australian children's book illustrations. One of the first substantial studies solely devoted to the study of illustration is Marcie Muir's Australian Children's Book Illustrators (1977) and more recently, A History of Australian Children's Book Illustration (1982).

In critical studies of Australian children's literature, a number of books have been published since the late seventies such as Maxine Walker's Writers Alive! Current Australian Authors of Books for Children (1977); Walter McVitty's Innocence and Experience: Essays on Contemporary Australian Children's Writers (1981); Maurice Saxby (ed.) Through Folklore to Literature: Papers presented at the Australian National Section of IBBY Conference on Children's Literature, Sydney, 1978; John Ryan's Australian Fantasy and Folklore (1981); The Imagineers (1983) edited by Belle Alderman and Lauren Harman and Writing and Illustrating for Children: Children's Book Council A.C.T. Seminars 1975-80 (1985) edited by Eleanor Stodart. Throughout these books there are various references to, and discussions of fantasy in literature for the young.

In this dissertation I attempt to find out how Australian illustrators deal with fantasy illustration in fiction. Any literary form, particularly fiction, reflects something of the history and preoccupations of the society which produces it. This seems as true of fantasy as it is of realistic fiction in Australian children's literature. The works discussed in this dissertation are selected primarily in chronological order to focus on the development of fantasy illustration. The dissertation aims at a representative rather than an exhaustive cover of this



genre. I owe a great deal to A History of Australian Children's Literature and A History of Australian Children's Book Illustration in selecting the works and illustrators on which this study is based. Some omissions must necessarily be made in a study which ranges so widely over a field of literature in an attempt to clarify and assess particular characteristics of the Australian contribution.

Throughout this dissertation, the intention is to examine the nature of illustration used within the fantasy genre in Australian children's literature. Before embarking on such a study of Australian fantasy it is important to arrive at some idea of what exactly is implied by the term "fantasy". Chapter one deals with definitions of fantasy so that they can be applied to the study of illustration.

Chapter two focuses on artistic and theatrical codes in relation to children's book illustration and describes insights to be used when examining children's illustrated literature. The work of Rudolf Arnheim and E. H. Gombrich is used to focus our attention on the book as a whole before analysing it in terms of ideas, setting, characters, balance, light, shape, colour and dynamics in illustration. It also specifically looks at Keir Elam's "map" (Appendix A) of the different levels of cultural competence that a spectator exercises in decoding the illustrated text and in understanding its dramatic characteristics. The parallels among book, illustration and

theatre are explored. Uri and Uspensky (1913) support this parallel, they see the stage text as "a whole, clearly broken up into single "stills" organised synchronically, each of which is set within the decor like a picture in a frame".<sup>2</sup>

Chapter three looks at book illustration belonging to the tradition of "illusion"<sup>3</sup> defined by E. H. Gombrich. The conventions for sustaining this illusion are explored. This chapter looks also at the constraints that have existed for the illustrator in the development of printing techniques used in children's book production.

Illustration and its relationship to the text is examined in Chapter four. "Fantasy begins where reality leaves off"<sup>4</sup>, the reader is asked to exercise his imagination using the viewpoint assigned to him by the illustrator. This chapter explores the distinctions between a storybook and a picture book, and the different styles used by illustrators in capturing the reader's imagination.

Chapter five identifies and selects the Australian illustrators studied in later chapters and the criteria used in the selection.

The emergence of Australian children's book illustrators is focused upon in Chapter six, tracing the development of Australian children's illustration in the pre-World War II period. Particular emphasis is given to those illustrators whose styles and techniques were strongly influenced by their English counterparts. Changing conceptions in Australian children's book illustration are explored, focusing on the Australian landscape and the subsequent anthropomorphising of flora and fauna into such memorable "Australian" characters as Snugglepote and Cuddlepote, Blinky Bill and Bunyip Bluegum.

Chapter seven examines in particular, the work of Mary and Elizabeth Durack and Pixie O'Harris' illustrations for Frank Davison, which deal with a world of Aboriginal children with sympathy and insight. Their books appeared at the time when Australians began to show a greater sympathy towards the Aboriginal culture.

Chapter eight examines the illustrations of Dick Roughsey and other aboriginal illustrators, in depicting the mythic creatures of the Dreamtime. Through this study we are given a further insight into the Australian aboriginal culture and shown the development of the illustration of the Aboriginal view of myth.

In Chapter nine, the work of Margaret Horder is discussed in relationship to the techniques used in her illustrations for such authors as Nan Chauncy, Joan Phipson and Patricia Wrightson. Her black and white sketches are compared with Annette McArthur-Onslow who also illustrated Nan Chauncy's work. These two illustrators worked with authors who were attempting to create successfully a fantasy for Australia and Australian children, and it is for this reason that they have been included in this study. They also provide that link between techniques used in storybook illustration and the growing emergence of colour and the Australian picture book.

Five illustrators, Ron Brooks, Deborah and Kilmeny Niland, Robert Ingpen and Peter Pavey have been identified for study in the final chapter. Their work shows the emergence of fantasy illustration in Australian picture books. Each illustrator's style is examined individually in relationship to their own work or in the illustration for other authors such as Jean Chapman or Jenny Wagner.

NOTES

1. Saxby, H. M. History of Australian Children's Literature, 1941-1970, Sydney : Wentworth Books, 1971, p.139
2. Lotman, Yuri and Uspensky, Boris Tipologia della cultura (trans) Milan : Bompiana, 1973, p.278
3. Gombrich, E. H. Art and Illusion, Princeton, N.J. : Princeton University Press, 1969 pp. 5-6
4. O'Dea, Marjory. The Convenience of Fantasy, Writing and Illustrating for Children, Children's Book Council of the A.C.T. Seminars 1975-80, Stodart, Eleanor (Ed.) A.C.T., 1985 p.9

## CHAPTER ONE

### Theories of Fantasy in Literature and its Interpretation in Illustration

Since the appearance in paperback of J.R.R. Tolkien's Lord of the Rings in 1965, there has been a remarkable resurgence of interest in fantasy literature. It has been possible for all writers with a serious purpose to employ once again the genre of "marvellous" writing, as they had not been inclined to do since the growth and dominance of the realist novel. According to Ann Swinfen in her book In Defence of Fantasy (1984), Tolkien at the very least made fantasy "respectable".<sup>1</sup> In particular, he helped to make fantasy the focus of critical and popular attention.

During the last decade there has been a considerable growth in serious and substantial study of literary fantasy, and to a lesser degree its illustration. Authors and academics have been trying to solve the problems of genre definition in books such as Lin Carter's Imaginary Worlds: The Art of Fantasy (1973); Tzvetan Todorov's The Fantastic: A Structural Approach to a Literary Genre (1973), translated from Introduction a la literature fantastique (1970); C.N. Marlove's Modern Fantasy: Five Studies (1975); L.Sprangue de Camp's Literary Swordsmen and Sorcerers: The Makers of Heroic Fantasy (1976); Eric Rabkin's The Fantastic in Literature (1976); W.R. Irwin's The Game of

the Impossible: A Rhetoric of Fantasy (1976); Rosemary Jackson's Fantasy: The Literature of Subversion (1981); Christine Brooke-Rose A Rhetoric of the Unreal (1981); and Ann Swinfen's In Defence of Fantasy (1984). In the field of children's literature there have appeared studies of fantasy like Marion Lochhead's The Renaissance of Wonder in Children's Literature (1972), Bruno Bettelheim's The Use of Enchantment (1976), Roger Sale's Fairy Tales and After (1978), and Anne Wilson's Magical Thought in Creative Writing (1983).

Long before the appearance of these books prominent authors like H.G. Wells, Sir Herbert Read, E.M. Forster, J.R.R. Tolkien and C.S. Lewis briefly expounded their theories of fantasy. In particular, Tolkien's essay, "On Fairy Stories" has had a great impact on this field of literature. The essay was originally and fittingly composed as an Andrew Lang Lecture in 1938 and published later in Tree and Leaf (1964).

Tolkien argues that fantasy is a rational activity of the human capacity to form mental images of things not actually present. In fantasy, therefore, man becomes a sub-creator of a Secondary World which exists against the Primary World of observable facts. When the achievement of the expression of wonder and strangeness gives "the inner consistency of reality"<sup>2</sup> which commands or induces Secondary Belief, fantasy becomes art, the operative

link between imagination and the final result is sub-creation. He thus asserts:

Fantasy is a natural human activity. It certainly does not destroy or even insult Reason; and it does not either blunt the appetite for, nor obscure the perception of, scientific verity. On the contrary, the keener and the clearer is the reason, the better fantasy will it make. If men were ever in a state in which they did not want to know or could not perceive truth (facts or evidence), then Fantasy would languish until they were cured. If they ever get into that state (it would seem at all impossible), Fantasy will perish, and become Morbid Delusion.<sup>3</sup>

Umberto Eco (1985) discusses further this role of man as sub-creator in all fiction:

The fact is that the characters are obliged to act according to the laws of the world in which they live. In other words, the narrator<sup>4</sup> is the prisoner of his own premises.

It seems that Jung's theory of the psychological "phantasy" explains well the nature of fantasy. By "phantasy" he means two things; phantasm and imaginative activity. Phantasm is the product of the imaginative activity which is the creative activity of the mind. Of the two types of phantasy, active phantasy and passive phantasy, active phantasy is derived from a positive participation of consciousness, whereas the characteristics of passive phantasy is the dream. Therefore Jung thinks active phantasy belongs to the highest form of psychic activity. This creative activity of the mind, he asserts, comes "into play in all the basic forms of psychic activity, whether thinking, feeling, sensation, or intuition."<sup>5</sup>



As far as the goal of literary fantasy is concerned, a growing number of critics and authors seem to hold the same view as Jung. Todorov says that "the real goal of the marvellous journey is the total exploration of universal reality".<sup>6</sup> However the definition of fantasy varies. W.R. Irwin the author of The Game of the Impossible, says that as phantasy "originates in free play of psyche, it resembles the intellection that can lead to literary fantasy".<sup>7</sup> He thus proposes that fantasy is a game of the impossible for which play is an indispensable element. As fantasy is a game to "make nonfact appear as fact",<sup>8</sup> fantasy needs the reader's participation in the game. "The reader's "belief" is one of the rules by which the game is played."<sup>9</sup>

In fantasy a reader believes or accepts the asserted impossibility as a fact of the Secondary World as Tolkien says. In order to maintain credence, therefore, fantasy needs "inner consistency of reality", in other words "realism of presentation"<sup>10</sup> as C.S. Lewis claims. This is opposed to Todorov's definition of the fantastic. He believes the reader's hesitation and suspension of disbelief are the conditions of the fantastic, as well as uncertainty and perceptions of ambiguity which Tolkien rejects. To Todorov, the fantastic "seems to be located on the frontier of two genres, the uncanny and the marvellous".<sup>11</sup> If a reader decides;

that laws of reality remain intact and permit an explanation of the phenomena described, we say that the work belongs... to the uncanny... If, on the contrary, he decides that new laws of nature must be entertained to account for the phenomena, we enter the genre of the marvellous.<sup>12</sup>

As we can see, there is confusion over the terms the "fantastic" and "fantasy". In fact Todorov does not use the term "fantasy" in his study of the fantastic. According to W.R. Irwin:

Much of the confusion in literary criticism originates in an assumption that the fantastic and fantasy are identical. Of course, they share a large area of congruity. But the fantastic, that is, the factitious existence of the antireal, is actually material. It is not of itself a literary form, and its presence, even preponderance, in a narrative does not necessarily make a fantasy. Elements of the fantastic may be introduced, singly or in combination, into almost any form of imaginative literature form.<sup>13</sup>

He then proposes the definition;

a narrative is fantasy if it presents the persuasive establishment and development of an impossibility, an arbitrary construct of mind with all under the control of logic and rhetoric.<sup>14</sup>

Ann Swinfen writes;

What may at first sight seem to be a paradox lies in fact at the heart of fantasy: that is, that to create an imaginative and imaginary world it is necessary to observe faithfully the rules of logic and inner consistency, which, although they may differ from those operating in our own world, must nevertheless be as true to themselves as their parallel operations are in the normal world.<sup>15</sup>

Fantasy is a form of thinking which is magical in character, free from the laws and realities of the external world, and therefore operates with special powers to bring things about in the mind alone. While this thought may sometimes resort to magic words, the language in which it expresses itself is not primarily verbal: it is primarily pictorial - the structure it creates as it tells a story is fundamentally a sequence of images. Words are used to communicate a fantasy to others, but thinking does not struggle for precision of expression through diction alone. The creator of fantasy as Eco states "is a prisoner of his own premise",<sup>16</sup> he further expounds the view:

writing a novel is a cosmological matter like the story told by Genesis (we all have to choose our role models as Woody Allen puts it).<sup>17</sup>

Tolkien who first applied the phrase "the sub-creative art"<sup>18</sup> to the writing of fantasy saw such literary creation as the natural outcome of man's own creation in the divine image. At the same time, the writing of fantasy appears to be closely linked with man's rational being and perception of the natural world.

Tolkien defines the term "fantasy" as embodying both "the Sub-creative Art in itself a quality of strangeness and wonder in the Expression... Fantasy (in this sense) is... not a lower but a high form of Art, indeed, the most nearly pure form, and so (when achieved) the most

potent".<sup>19</sup>

In this study the term "fantasy" will be taken to mean both the sub-creative art "with its quality of strangeness and wonder"<sup>20</sup> and the kinds of works which such art produces.

This study will attempt to show that Australian fantasy writers and illustrators have juxtaposed the possible with the strange, the unlikely and the marvellous: they have ridden the boundaries between the Primary and Secondary Worlds. To date, Australian writers and illustrators have not created full-blown Secondary Worlds such as the Forest Sauvage, Middle Earth or Earthsea. They have been more inclined to incorporate elements of the fantastic. Although, it may be claimed that Aboriginal writers and illustrators have given us glimpses of what is for most Australians a Secondary World of myth. This world of myth expressed the Aboriginal beliefs about the Mythic creatures of the Dreamtime, many of these myths not previously written down or illustrated until retold to a wider audience by such Aboriginal writers and illustrators as Gulpilil or Roughsey.

The essential element of all fantasy is "the marvellous" which will be regarded as anything outside the normal space-time continuum of the everyday world. The marvellous element which lies at the heart of all fantasy we

currently believe, is composed of what can never exist in the world of empirical experience. The writer as sub-creator creates a complete and self-consistent "secondary world", and if he is successful, the result is "secondary belief"<sup>21</sup> on the part of the reader:

He makes a Secondary World which your mind can enter. Inside it, what he relates is "true": it accords with the laws of that world. You therefore believe it, while you are, as it were, inside.<sup>22</sup>

Science fiction is excluded since it treats essentially of what does not exist now, but might perhaps exist in the future. Science fiction is, according to Tolkien, the most escapist form of all literature.<sup>23</sup> Irwin adopts Kingsley Amis' statement on science fiction and claims that:

Science fiction is that class of prose narrative treating of a situation that could not arise in the world as we know it, but which is hypothesised on the basis of some innovation in science or technology, or psuedo-science or psuedo-technology,<sup>24</sup> whether human or extraterrestrial in origin.

In science fiction, Eleanor Cameron, the author of The Green and Burning Tree: On the Writing and Enjoyment of Children's Books (1963) argues that entering another time is typically a matter of travel by machine whereas, in fantasy, it is a state of being, a state of consciousness or awareness, an increase in sensitivity.<sup>25</sup> In children's literature there is a sub-genre for this kind of fiction that is "Time Fantasy" to which books like Philippa Pearce's Tom's Midnight Garden (1958), Nan Chauncy's Tangara (1960)

and Ruth Park's Playing Beatie Bow (1980) belong. This sub-genre seems to have emerged as we have become aware of our preoccupation with time. Distinctive features of this kind of fiction are that modern child-readers travel in the imagination between the present and the past and these two different times coexist in their world. What they gain from their travel in time is a realization of a new dimension of time and awareness of the past which is hidden behind the passing time of their daily life.

The time fantasy, unlike most types of modern fantasy, is a comparatively recent development. Such fantasies involve the movement of characters in and out of some form of Secondary World, but the perception of this world is often indistinct and dreamlike, in strong contrast with the Secondary Worlds of such writers as Tolkien and Le Guin, worlds whose tangible secondary reality is evoked in powerfully sensuous detail. These time fantasies, belong rather to an intermediate area of imaginative experience, where an often precarious balance must be maintained between two distinct worlds, and where the awareness of one world is constantly coloured by awareness of the other. Like all fantasy, time fantasy makes considerable intellectual demands on writer, illustrator and reader.

It is obvious then in this study, that fantasy has a different approach to the depiction of reality. Critics seem to agree with Diana Waggoner when she says that

the aim of fantasy is: "to enlighten and clarify and awaken us to a new vision of ordinary reality".<sup>26</sup> According to Ann Swinfen, a serious fantasy is "deeply rooted in human experience and is relevant to human living."<sup>27</sup> Its major differences from the realist novel is that it takes "account of areas of experience - imaginative, subconscious, visionary - which free the human spirit to range beyond the limits of empirical primary world reality".<sup>28</sup>

For a hundred years novelists have tried to describe and perhaps "capture" the outside, factual world but fantasists, since the 1880s onwards, have been trying to see our world with a different perception and enlarge the dimensions of reality. Irwin writes;

In fantasy there is the playful pretense that the content is real, but the only "realism" is in presentation, which because it exists alone must be persuasive. But the revolutionary novelists, of whatever period, is playing no game. Such a one says, as did Virginia Woolf in her essay "Mr. Bennett and Mrs. Brown", that the "reality" revealed by "realism" is either invalid or fraudulent or both. Things are not what they have been made to seem. The "high roads of life" are not necessarily the ways to clear knowing; the customary representations are routes that mislead. Reality is there, but it must be reached by seizure, refraction, total mythic recasting, or other means that, however devious in execution, gets to the heart of the matter.<sup>29</sup>

Tolkien clearly asserts that one of the virtues of fairy-stories is "a regaining of a clear view".<sup>30</sup> C.S. Lewis aptly writes of a child who reads a fairy-tale:

He does not despise real woods because he has

read of enchanted woods: the reading makes all real wood a little enchanted. This is a special kind of longing... The boy reading the fairy tale desire and is happy in the very fact of desiring. For his mind has not been concentrated on himself<sup>31</sup>, as it often is in the more realistic story.

The imaginative spectatorship of fantasy has the special feature of allowing us to look on at ourselves, ourselves as participants in the imagined events. In spite of seeing themselves as participants in the story, the children engaged in make belief remain onlookers too; as spectators they can when need be, turn away from the fantasy events and attend again to the demands of real life.

We use stories and illustrations to make sense of the world and to feel at home in it compensating in dreams for what we are denied, putting to rights what we feel is crooked, re-ordering experience the better to accommodate it. In life, there are recurrent crises, temporary judgements and only one final end. When authors and illustrators invent fantasy such as in the fairy-tales, and depicts characters and scenes, we meet ourselves in them, and the end is delayed. Tolkien says:

These stories have a way of spilling over the confines of a single<sup>32</sup> book, they have about them a neverending.

"Once upon an time" and "happily ever after" are described by Tolkien:

End phrases of this kind are to be compared to



the margins and frames of pictures and are no more to be thought of as the real end of any particular fragment of the seamless Web of Story than the frame is of the visionary scene, or the casement of the Outer World.<sup>33</sup>

The significant use of nonrational phenomena not only enables us to distinguish between fantasy and the various other branches of literature, but also serves as one of the two principal criteria - the other is setting - that guides us in dividing the genre into its two major classifications: high fantasy and low fantasy.<sup>34</sup> These two criteria are interrelated since setting in fantasy refers to the type of world described, and non-rational phenomena are governed by the laws that prevail in this world. The worlds of high fantasy are Secondary Worlds, such as the Forest Sauvage, Middle Earth, or Prydain, and they manifest a consistent order that is explainable in terms of the supernatural (i.e. deities) or in terms of less definable (but still recognizable) magical powers of faerie (e.g. wizards and enchantresses). Examples of works of high fantasy would be The Once and Future King (1962) by T.H. White or The Lord of the Rings (1954) by J.R.R. Tolkien.

On the other hand, the world of low fantasy is much closer to the Primary World - this is the world we live in. It too, demonstrates a consistent order, but its order is explainable in terms of natural law are normally taken to exclude the supernatural and the magical. Consequently, when something nonrational occurs there are no explanations,

rational or nonrational. The causes simply are not forthcoming: they are inexplicable. This aspect of low fantasy is what accounts for its ability to shock and surprise the reader into horror or laughter. Examples of low fantasy would be George Orwell's Animal Farm (1945) or Watership Down (1973) by Richard Adams.

Whatever form a writer's or illustrator's characters may take whether human, animal, mechanical or marvellous, their fundamental characteristics and concerns are those of modern man. Tolkien's characters may take the form of "elves, orcs, hobbits, ents or dwarfs, but they all share in some degree the characteristics and foibles of human nature."<sup>35</sup>

Aristotle asserts in the Poetics (reprint 1966) that art has its origins in "mimesis" which is an instinctive faculty in mankind. It is, he claims, the desire for imitation which prompts the creative process and also fosters the pleasure which an audience takes in a work of art. The primary natures of such fundamental things as food, grass or trees are not simply imitated, they are enhanced by their setting in fantasy. This mimesis of the primary world is sharpened by the creation of a secondary world of numinous experience.

A mimetic view would typically find little value in fantasy. Yet fantasy since it never quite escapes our experience of the "actual", allows us to reconsider the Primary World. Art, does not simply reproduce the surface of the world, it actually helps us notice, or construct interpretative frames for the world. While for Tolkien, as with the poet Shelley, these aspects of fantasy;

defeat the curse which binds us to be subjected to the accident of surrounding impressions. And whether it spreads its own figured curtain, or withdraws life's dark veil from before the scene of things, it equally creates for us a being within our being. It makes us the inhabitants of a world to which the familiar world is chaos. It reproduces the common universe of which we are portions and percipients, and it purges from our inward sight the film of familiarity which obscures from us the wonder of our being.<sup>36</sup>

Fantasy depictions in words or pictures, or a combination of the two, involve making deep seated and sometimes unacknowledged feelings of fear, or ecstasy, or desire, materialise as recognisable images; they are inspired by, but separate from everyday existence. For this reason, the accessories of the familiar world are often abandoned in favour of those suggesting the obscure or distant past or the unknown future. In addition, fantasy embraces the recurring or enduring symbols created by man in his unending struggle to impose meaning on the world in which he lives.

According to Marjory O'Dea "fantasy begins where reality leaves off".<sup>37</sup> I would argue with her that fantasy may capture reality "crabwise". It does not deal in fact but figments of the imagination. Fantasy is a creature of the imagination. On unfamiliar territory, the reader is put off guard and the writer and illustrator are able to express ideas and feelings about the real world. It is this delicate nature of the fantasy depiction that demands the reader "to exercise his imagination, to draw his own conclusions, to contribute to his own enjoyment and in a sense improve on the book itself".<sup>38</sup>

As William Feaver writes in When We Were Young (1977), in illustration everything is shown to be possible;

Through ridicule and exaggeration (two ways of expressing fears) he/the illustrator serves as intermediary and exorcist. In the end, the prince is restored to his human form and birthright. The beanstalk is chopped down; the bully giant crashes to the ground and the shadows melt.<sup>39</sup>

The task of the fantasy illustrator is to focus and release the imagination and reason. Tolkien asserts that fantasy "does not destroy or even insult reason"<sup>40</sup> it is clear that he ranks the creative ability as reason's peer, not as its agent.

Essentially, fantasy takes for granted not only the existence of the physical, or primary world, but also that of a secondary world of the imagination, where truth is

that which is constructed and apprehended by the imagination. Fantasy has its own vision of reality and setting, and may have its own "natural" laws which differ from the generally accepted and experienced ones. Always the real world is made to seem more glorious because of the existence of that which is beyond normal vision - Cinderella reflects the radiance through the wishes bestowed on her by her fairy godmother. Thus fantasy makes visible to the inward eye, concepts that the creative imagination has given birth to. What is imagined can only be built out of what has first been discovered in the real world, coloured by experience and enriched and intensified by feeling.

E.M. Forster in Aspects of the Novel quoted in Literature and the Young Child by Joan Cass says:

"What does fantasy ask of us? It asks us to pay something extra". Is this extra a sixth sense, the "willing suspension of disbelief", the ability to cross the bridge between sense and nonsense, fact and fancy or the sudden discovery in ourselves of unconscious memories and dreams we had forgotten we possessed".<sup>41</sup>

From fairytale through folklore to the literary fantasy, images recur in various guises to help manipulate the relationship of the primary and secondary world. In fantasy, the physical laws of nature as we know them are no longer immutable for example, the seasons falter such as in Annette Macarthur-Onslow's The Giant Bamboo Happening; animals and humans converse together as in Dot and the Kangaroo; or gravity can be defied as in Mary Poppins (1934). In particular the laws pertaining to past, present

and future are upset and the tyranny of time is broken: princesses sleep for years as in the fairytale "Sleeping Beauty"; a thousand years becomes as a day in Peter Pavey's The Day of the Diprotodon.

As time merges with timelessness, secondary worlds emerge from behind the barriers of our ordinary views of time and reality: humans enter dark gardens and find rainbows as in Ron Brook's Annie's Rainbow; humans fall down rabbit holes or hide in wardrobes that lead to some version of the secondary world as in Alice in Wonderland or C.S. Lewis' The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe (1950). These hidden worlds are inhabited by beings of another dimension, often with an extension of human capabilities and sometimes creatures of such rare quality intrude into the world of reality that they cause awe, consternation or disbelief such as Martin's visit in Patricia Wrightson's Down to Earth.

Akin to such beings are those humans who are bequeathed special powers or qualities that enable them to move through time or space to defy physical laws: the talisman offers the children protection in the Durack's The Way of the Whirlwind. The bestowing of such properties frequently comes through a significant object such as a magic lamp, a ring or a seed, an incantation, a spell or a curse. In fantasy both words and objects can gain special portent.

Elizabeth Cook in The Ordinary and the Fabulous

(1976) says:

The mind that thought of "light, heavy, grey, yellow, still, swift, also conceived of magic that would make heavy things light and able to fly, turn grey lead into yellow gold, and the still rock into swift water".<sup>42</sup>

Fantasy offers the reader a perspective of our world by viewing it at a distance from the Secondary World. The initial task of the writer or illustrator of a fantasy work is to plan a convincing framework of the secondary world in order to provide Secondary realism, and to elicit a sense of "awe and wonder" in the reader. On one hand, awe and wonder derived from the "arresting strangeness"<sup>43</sup> as C.S. Lewis terms it, that springs from creatures, landscapes, and the magical and supernatural causality of the secondary world. And on the other hand, awe and wonder derived from our recognition of elements within the other world that remind us of similar elements in our world that we tend to forget - universal situations, archetypes, values and standards, and even creatures and their settings. Tolkien refers to such recognition as "recovery", "a regaining of a clear view" or "seeing things as we are (or were) meant to see them".<sup>44</sup> Thus, Tolkien suggests we cannot read in fantasy of Pegasus without then viewing a horse in a new fresh light.

The writer and illustrator of fantasy, can not accept as the realist can a given setting, a given heritage of ideas and beliefs, a given world view. These they must

select and construct for themselves, yet having made their own rules, they must then abide by them. In order to command belief on the part of the reader, the worlds they create, must have "the inner consistency of reality".<sup>45</sup> In addition to its own essential inner consistency, the secondary world, like all fantasy, requires a firm basis in primary world reality. Thus writers and illustrators must induce Secondary belief or lose credibility, and the interest of the reader. Through fantasy "man does indeed enter the Perilous Realm, and may find there both the familiar and strange, and the strange made familiar".<sup>46</sup>

Although there is always some common ground between the Primary World and any Secondary World, the Secondary World fantasy is clearly the furthest removed from everyday experience. The Secondary World conceived and constructed with skill, will command complete secondary belief on the part of the committed reader to a far greater degree than any irruption of the marvellous into a Primary World reality. Provided the Secondary World does induce Secondary belief, the advantage of the genre is obvious. The writer or illustrator has complete artistic freedom, within his self-constructed framework.

It will become clear in later chapters that Australian fantasy writers and illustrators during the period studied in this dissertation, have not been willing perhaps able to create complete Secondary Worlds such as



Earthsea, Middle Earth or Prydain. Australian writers and illustrators have ridden the boundaries between fantasy and realism and have incorporated fantastic elements of our present world, in their work.

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## CHAPTER TWO

### ARTISTIC AND THEATRICAL INTERPRETATIONS IN EXAMINING CHILDREN'S ILLUSTRATED LITERATURE

Pamela Allen author/illustrator of such children's picture books as Mr. Archimedes' Bath (1980) Who Sank the Boat? (1982), and Bertie and the Bear (1983) likens her book to a "complete piece of theatre which I could see and hold in my hand as you can hold an onion."<sup>1a</sup> I intend to use this theatrical analogy throughout this dissertation, linking it with art theory in examining children's illustrated literature.

I see the book illustrator as having a "time  
<sup>1b</sup>sequence" namely the length and sequence of the book to lead the participant through an experience. Where the illustrator is also the author of the text, problems in "interpretation" are considerably lessened. But, the overall problems of producing an integrated work are no less. Many decisions must be made which affect the success of the final product. The design and layout, the selection of typeface and paper, the choice of technique, medium and colour - each separately or in combination can spoil or enhance the final effect. Like Umberto Eco's view of the author quoted earlier on page 11, Noela Young says that an illustration that appears in a book, "is like the tip of an iceberg that shows above the water; what one doesn't see is

all that goes on before that drawing is put on to paper, the research, the thought and observation and the experience that will be combined to produce a very simple drawing, perhaps only a few lines."<sup>2</sup>

I do not see this chapter as presenting a method of analysing art or theatre so much as a series of exercises in discernment centering on the book as a whole, and the problems involving ideas, setting, characters, balance, shape, light, colour and dynamics in illustration used by children's book illustrators. I will use these foci as ways of helping the reader to think clearly about what happens when we look at pictures in a book.

When we enter the illustrated book or in Keir Elam's case, "the theatre" and agree to participate in the performer-spectator transaction, we automatically apply those codes <sup>3</sup> (Appendix A), specific to the book or theatre that permit us to apprehend it in its own terms and to make meaning. If we know these codes of the theatre and the illustrated book we can learn to use them as a means of interpreting the illustrations.

The stage or page is in the first instance, "an empty space", <sup>4</sup> to use Peter Brook's phrase, distinguished from its surroundings by visible markers and potentially "fillable" visually. E.H. Gombrich discusses "framing" and "filling"<sup>5</sup> in his book A Sense of Order (1979). He

describes "framing" as delimiting the field of activity both for the decorator and the viewer, and "filling" as organising the resultant space. This idea will be further explored in Chapter three. Beni Montresor states that "the blank page is like an empty stage that must be filled with scenes, costumes, movement, and theatrical crescendo; and the words and colours become the music".<sup>6</sup>.

Jiri Veltrusky (1964) succinctly writes "all that is on the stage is a sign"<sup>7</sup>, and the audience is the ultimate maker of its meaning. It is with the spectator or reader in the case of a book, that communication begins and ends. The reader is called upon not only to employ a specific competence, but also to work hard and continuously at piecing together into a coherent structure the information he receives through the sequence of illustrations and words in the book. Author, illustrator and reader are part of a community of interpreters.

The first factor that strikes a reader when he enters a book or the theatre, is the physical organisation. In Bruce Treloar's book Bumble's Dream (1981) the organisation of the illustrations and text encourages the reader to participate actively in the story. The book is full of visual clues - the jacket cover introduces Mr. Bumble's dream, the endpapers hint at the dream inviting the reader inside Mr. Bumble's home. The author/illustrator has identified to the reader the setting of the story. This can

be compared to theatre, where the audience starts with the assumption that every detail is an intentional sign, even the poster and programme design. The performance itself begins with the information-rich, stage space and its use in the creation of the opening image. It is not unknown for audiences to gasp or clap at this opening image. In Keir Elam's words:

The audience can "bracket off" what is presented to them from normal social praxis and so perceive the performance "as a network of meanings i.e. as a text".<sup>8</sup>

Rudolf Arnheim in Art and Visual Perception: The Psychology of the Creative Eye says that "the perceived image, not the paint, is the work of art".<sup>9</sup> Arnheim suggests that every visual experience is essentially a pattern related to some background of other such experiences, that incomplete outlines tend to be completed in the perception of the observer.

any stimulus pattern tends to be seen in such a way that the resulting structure is as simple as the given condition permits.<sup>10</sup>

"However automatic our first response to an image may be" writes E.H. Gombrich, "the actual reading can never be a passive affair".<sup>11</sup>

Having establishing setting, ideas and characters, it is then important to consider how to communicate the story to the reader. The book must be, in Dorothy Butler's view, a communication, a link, a



conversation between the reader and the listener.<sup>12</sup> Arnheim feels that we have understood a picture only when we have gone beyond describing it as an arrangement of shapes and have seen it as "the organised action of expressive visual forces".<sup>13</sup> All shape he believes, is meaningful.

Form always goes beyond the practical function of things by finding in their shape the visual qualities of roundness or sharpness, strength and frailty, harmony or discord. It thereby reads them symbolically as images of the human condition.<sup>14</sup>

Following his cue, we might begin to ask what we are told about the characters and setting in children's literature by the physical forms illustrators have given them. In Possum Magic (1983) the invisible Hush, seems very different from the solid rounded character who appears at the end of the story. Arnheim goes on to insist that "in a successful work of art one perceives the subject rather than the shapes,"<sup>15</sup> and he is concerned with "art as the representation of reality".<sup>16</sup>

In examining illustrations in early Australian illustrated children's books, artists were not concerned with representing "reality", the form of the landscape depicted was unrealistic. Gombrich is concerned with this aspect, with demonstrating how closely shaped each artist is by the tradition in which he learns his art. The schemata given to the artist by his or her forebears delimits what he sees, so that while he studies nature he sees what he has

been taught by other painters to see. An Eighteenth century English landscape artist working on an Australian landscape, Gombrich shows, painted it in terms of the schemata of English art, and the resulting painting looked English - this is true also of the early illustrated books. Quoting Nietzsche, Gombrich observes that the artist tends "to see what he paints rather than paints what he sees."<sup>17</sup>

When comparing this to the theatre, the kind of world constructed in the course of the performance with respect to the "real" world of performers and spectators, and in particular the immediate theatrical context is in Elam's terms "a spatio-temporal elsewhere represented as though actually present for the audience".<sup>18</sup> In dealing with these fictional constructs the so called "theory of possible worlds"<sup>19</sup> is used. Elam here overlaps with aspects of Tolkien's theory. Very loosely, this theory is defined as "ways things could have been",<sup>20</sup> and might be.

Fantasy can and does make its own rules, and as a result of this, it is endowed with peculiar convenience. Veltrusky<sup>21</sup> observes that on stage a given prop, for example, may come to stand for its user, or for the action in which it is employed. Jindrich Honzl<sup>22</sup> notes another example as the representation of a battlefield by a single tent, or of a church by a gothic spire. This same principle applies to actors whose actions are taken to occur in a wider context than the immediate apparent situation. In a

similar way, the picture or illustrated book provides details which both in single frame and picture sequence we "read" in order to build a coherent story. The details are seen as signs presenting significant information to the reader.

The limits of fantasy are set by the imagination and skill of the illustrator or writer because, if these can convince the reader that something is possible, then it is possible for those two people at least. According to Nan Hunt, author of such books as The Everywhere Dog (1978), The Pow Toe (1979) and Rain Hail or Shine (1984):

Fantasy is like flying a kite. You hold the string firmly in your hand and you run with the kite and throw it into the air to get it started. Then you allow the kite to go the full length of the string. It is the length of the string that limits, otherwise it has its own life. The child will always know that it is fantasy because he will be aware of the string which limits it. There will always be something he can relate to that deals with life as he knows it which yet allows his mind to fly as the kite does into the delight of the sky and the breeze and the "maybe".<sup>23</sup>

Styles vary considerably, and this will later be illustrated in further chapters looking specifically at Australian children's literature, but ultimately we see all art as an invitation to share the creator's world "a door thrown open or a mesh to ensnare".<sup>24</sup> Like Arnheim, we see artwork as presenting a carefully contrived experience for an observer. Also, when words and pictures interact in a mutually dependent fashion, a believable world is created

and the characters come to life. Maurice Sendak's character, Max, in Where the Wild Things Are (1963) (fig. 1) when we first meet him, is wearing a wolf suit with stylised claws, whiskers, tail and ears. His body is small in proportion and seems baby-cute rather than monstrous. His face and body project a wide range of feelings: rage, annoyance, bemusement, glee, self-satisfaction and finally - weary contentment. The release of tension is perhaps revealed when the head of his wolf-suit tossed back, reveals a sleepy little boy rather than the "wild thing" he has been.

In this book, the words alone without the picture, do not tell the reader which mischief is "of one kind". Without the picture, our information is incomplete. Yet the words: "That very night in Max's room a forest grew . . ." lets the child's imagination spread out. When the book reaches its climax "the wild rumpus" this is wholly conveyed through pictures. The book's illustrations provide a dramatic experience: direct, immediate, vivid and moving. The ostensive aspect of the stage "show" distinguishes it for example, from simple story-telling where persons, objects and events are necessarily described and recounted. It involves the showing of objects and events to the audience rather than describing, explaining or defining them. It requires quite obviously, the audience to interpret what is presented.

The most successful children's books achieve a unique relationship between narration and visual imagery to be dealt with further, in the following chapters, where the arrangement of illustrations with the text is discussed.

It is important to examine the illustrators handling of style and medium. Illustrator's work has been somewhat hampered over the years by methods of book reproduction, but this has improved due to the technological range of options now available. There is letterpress, which uses "line" blocks usually black and white illustrations. The term "line" illustration is where the illustrator uses black lines on white paper making use of different techniques such as cross-hatching, stipple etc., to give the appearance of a range of tones from black, through to grey to white. Secondly, there is the "offset" which produces black and white and colour. Thirdly there is the "gravure" process, used in printing colour books. Reproduction techniques today allow an illustrator to work in almost any medium or style that he chooses but, in the choice of what he illustrates and how he presents it to the child, he must always keep the audience in mind.

The skilful illustrator, like the stage designer and director, will use all sorts of devices at his disposal to create his illustration. The expressive and dramatic use of shading in the work of many illustrators such as: using brightness values in ways that contradict the "rules" of

realistic lighting but which are effective in an abstract way. Light and shadow can control the reader's attention. Some illustrators of children's books have used brightness gradients to define shapes in an unrealistic way such as Lois Lenski does with doll-like figures in for example, Little Sioux Girl (1958). The symbolic use of shadow work in N.C. Wyeth's illustrations of Robert Louis Stevensons's Kidnapped (1886), suggests the inner nature of the characters by the shadows they cast. Uncle Ebenezer Balfour's shadow looms large and menacing as he contemplates murder, and when the small figure of Alan Breck holds off a band of sailors by himself, his shadow dances, twice his size on the wall and ceiling of the ship's cabin.

In examining style and code, Gombrich looks at the characteristics of the medium in which the illustrator works, examines its particular properties and capacity for depicting the world. He calls what is produced a kind of "cryptogram"<sup>26</sup> of reality, a sign, something different from what it represents. The audience has, therefore, to learn how to "read" the representation.

In Bruce Treloar's Bumble's Dream as Mr. Bumble's dream takes form, time is passing, a point that is made in the illustrations, rather than the text. The observant viewer will note Mr. Bumble is initially in singlet and bare feet and Timothy similarly attired, but after the collecting of junk is completed, they appear in warmer clothing. Storm

clouds also suggest a change of seasons. Pen lines are used as a tight framework around most of the story, but as Mr. Bumble prepares for the test flight, the contrasting penline and watercolour are used to distinguish reality from dream.

In Pamela Allen's book Mr. Archimedes' Bath, the author/illustrator takes a basic idea "the displacement of water" as the theme. The bold coloured illustrations give a wealth of messages to the reader. There are the guilty looks on the animals who think they are to blame, there is their grovelling at the tone of their master's voice, these looks and actions build up the atmosphere of the story and are boldly presented in the illustrations. The words and illustrations help the reader actualize their imagination and give new perspectives to a basic idea such as the one used in Pamela Allen's book.

As illustrative traditions lengthen, as recognised by Gombrich, graphic imagery develops its own line of descent. Tenniel's "Alice" is a direct descendent of the copperplate and woodcut heroines of the eighteenth century e.g. "Little Goody Two-Shoes". She in turn inspired the "Dorothy" drawn by John Neill for L. Frank Baum's Oz Books, and "Dot" illustrated by Frank Mahony for Ethel Pedley's Dot and the Kangaroo (1913). These figures were given character as well as presence by the illustrators and these characters have served as links between wonderlands of fantasy for children and the normality of ordinary life.

Such interconnections and cross-currents as Feaver writes, are far from straightforward:

Illustrators follow snakes-and-ladders courses. Sometimes, apparently they leap years ahead of their time - in the inspired amateurism of Topfler, for instance. More often they snake back into proven manners. Picture images and literary imagery may correspond well enough but a perfect match is hardly ever achieved except by an author-illustrator (Lear, Potter, de Brunhoff).<sup>27</sup>

A further theoretical perspective I shall use to examine each book in this dissertation, is that of Edward T. Hall whose approach to the study of theatre, I find a helpful summary and pertinent to my previous discussion. He claims that there are three units or "spaces" "fixed-feature", "semi-fixed feature" and "informal"<sup>28</sup>. The "fixed-feature" space involves broadly static architectural figurations. When examining a book it relates chiefly to the book's shape and dimensions. For example, the format of a picture book is very different from that of the usual storybook.

In theatre the "semi-fixed feature" space concerns such moveable but non-dynamic objects such as furniture, the set, and auxiliary factors such as lighting; and in informal theatrical space, stage and auditorium arrangements. When we relate this to the illustration on a page, we would examine the setting; the use of colour to



establish the mood as in Annette MacArthur-Onslow's The Man from Snowy River (1977); the contrasting of light and dark as in Margaret Holder's sketches; and the relationship of all illustrations to the text. All these would establish the semi-fixed feature space as in theatre and be significant in carrying meaning.

The third space of Hall's to be used in focusing on the book is "informal" space. This has as its units, the ever shifting relations of proximity and distance between individuals. We refer to the relationships between the characters within the book; and the relationship between the characters and the reader, or in theatre between the "space" and the audience. This relationship between reader, writer and illustrator is made and sustained by a mutual agreement that one should interpret the telling in a way that seems like listening.

Book illustration draws on something of the conventions of stage drama. Sitting in the audience, you can see the whole play from the one vantage point, and always in the same frame. Illustrators can indicate to their audience what to look at or, shape the audience's attention at any particular time, excluding everything else from view by using close ups, for instance, or faded, blurred images, with only the key features in focus. The meaningful shift of the eyes, or gesture of the hand may not be noticed by the theatre goer; the illustrator such as

Julie Vivas in Possum Magic makes sure that the audience does not miss the visually essential information in the apparent gestures of magic by Grandma Poss producing noticeable changes in Hush.

When looking closely at Australian children's book illustration as we do in this study of fantasy and the illustrations of the artists identified and selected in Chapter Five I have also drawn as a summary on the guidelines<sup>29</sup> used in selecting recipients for the Kate Greenaway Medal to help focus my attention on the books to be studied. With regard to the illustrations I will consider such things as graphic style, content, layout in relationship to the text and coordination of illustrations with the text in depicting character.

It is important to examine each work as a whole, then safely guided by the structure of the whole, try to recognise the principal features and explore their cohesive power over dependent details. Using this procedure, the entire wealth of the work it is hoped will reveal itself, and fall into place, as we perceive it and thus allow us both to comment and judge.



*“The night Max  
wore his wild suit  
and made mischief  
of one kind”*

Fig. 1. Max, Where the Wild Things Are, Sendak (1968)

## NOTES

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### CHAPTER THREE

#### ILLUSTRATION AS ILLUSION

The main development in the last three hundred years of illustration in children's books primarily reflects a striving for accurate representation of the artist's initial work. The development in printing and reproduction in response to the growth of the middle-class audience for books and magazines offered a perfect medium for expressing the cultural preoccupations of the time.

The mid-19th century saw the emergence in England of the weekly family magazine, factual, humorous, literary or religious in content, but in every case profusely illustrated. The consequent demand for graphic work provided a new source of regular employment for many artists, assuring them wider public exposure than was achieved by even the most successful easel painters. Consequently, the various branches of illustrative work attracted many of the most gifted artists of the day. Many of these artists were hampered by the reproduction methods of the time. But given these limitations, what the great children's book illustrators were able to do was to find a new way of handling certain artistic problems, and still show the reader fresh visions of, and for, childhood. These models allowed the reader to emulate and not merely to imitate them, allowing readers' imagination to be freed of

all constraint. Those book illustrators who chose to create fantasy illustration encouraged in the reader a development of imaginative powers.

According to E.H. Gombrich in Art and Illusion

(1960);

the true miracle of the language of art is not that it enables the artist to create the illusion of reality. It is that under the hands of a great master the image becomes translucent. In teaching us to see the visible world afresh, he gives us the illusion of looking into the invisible realms of the mind - if only we know, as Philostratus says, how to use our eyes.

The restriction of the medium sometimes would seem to impede the purpose of the illustration as expressed by Dooley (1980), "to bridge the gap between the 'real' world and the world created by the book enabling, the reader to pass more easily between them".<sup>2</sup> In the "world of the book", the reader of illustrations and text is learning to review the ways he or she interprets the actual and the ordinary. Fantasy illustrations allow the reader to see the results of the human imagination -- imagination, being freed of the constraints of the actual. So the borderlands of the actual and the fantastic are blurred further.

Although book art belongs to the tradition of "illusion"<sup>3</sup> in art as defined by E.H. Gombrich, the illusion is not based on what one sees in a mirror - that is, actual spatial relationships but, on the fictional value concerning

these relationships as they are represented by words. As Gombrich has impressed upon us, "making" precedes "matching":<sup>4</sup> we learn to match the marks on the canvas to our visual experience of the world, and whatever kind or degree of illusion we accept depends upon a host of other cultural factors.

In literature, if Lear in the nineteenth century introduces us to "impossible" worlds, Mitsumasa Anno in the twentieth century presents us with the world of impossible pictures. Anno plays games with the illusion of space. In this he follows directly in the footsteps of M.C. Escher. Elements of Escher's "Waterfall" or "Ascending and Descending" are readily recognisable in Anno's Alphabet (1975, Upside Downers (1971) and especially in Topsy-Turvies (1970). Anno's figures walk up a staircase to a landing leading to a staircase, (fig 2) which takes them up another flight but back to the level they started from. Anno's figures, caught in this paradox, show signs of desperation, except for the artist at the lower left, who may just draw his way out of the situation he was drawn into.

In children's illustrated books the reader is called upon to infer three-dimensional forms from flat surfaces, to imagine an unseen side of a figure, and to supplement the information given. Completion of the incomplete is a fundamental operation of looking at pictures.<sup>5</sup>



There are picture book illustrators, who take pleasure in exercising the viewer's imagination. Richard Egielski plays with the limits of suggestion in Arthur Yorinks' Sid and Sol(fig 3). Having once introduced the giant Sol, Egielski delights in showing us only part of the whole. From a pair of feet, an ear, an eye, three fingers or even his breath alone, we are left to infer his whole galumpish self.

The ultimate play with incompleteness is, of course, the total blank. Confronted by nothing, the beholder must assume the illustrator's role, becoming co-creator rather than re-creator of the book. Thus, in Fungus the Bogeyman (1977), Raymond Briggs "deletes" a picture with the following directive to the reader "The publishers wish to state that this picture has been deleted in the interests of good taste and public decency". The effect is to heighten our awareness of the "book as book" and the "picture as picture".

Lawrence Sterne in Tristram Shandy, plays with the complexities of completion. He "unrealistically" interprets his story over and over again, refuses to let us read straight through, frustrates and plays with our desire to learn, know, keep to the point and come to a conclusion. Barbara Hardy in The Cool Web (1977) says Sterne "juggles, shows off, and teases us in a form which draws special

attention to its own nature."<sup>6</sup> Both Sterne and Briggs reveal in their work the complexities of such conventions as exaggeration, distortion, suspension and isolation which engage the reader's imagination. Briggs's work is an example of book illustration paralleling the work of the narrative artist such as Sterne. Briggs used book illustration as a narrative medium and not merely decoration.

When we look at pictures, we must assume the viewpoint assigned to us by the artist, who chooses the angle from which we are to behold any given scene. The artist's choice to view a scene from front or behind, sideways, up or down, makes different demands on the beholder. Picture play in children's books makes of the beholder a fellow traveller "in the creative adventure of the artist".<sup>7</sup> This undoubtedly, is a key to the pleasure we derive from such books. They fully engage our visual imagination and offer us an opportunity to celebrate our awareness of the process by which artists "make" and beholders "make meaning of" pictures.

However, Ian Ribbons when asked "How then do I see the job of the Illustrator?" answers:

The author provides the plot, suspense, characters, and above all the particular flavour or mood which enfolds us, powerfully but vaguely. Then the artist builds from it and makes that mood explicit by giving us his vision, using fragments "he chooses" and arranges from the real world.<sup>8</sup>

The children's book illustrators have to solve the problem of representing a world a child can clearly recognise with the necessary "characteristic" elements somehow represented.

In discussing any representation, if it is to evoke successfully a fictional dramatic scene, will create what Susanne Langer defines as "virtual" space, or "virtual experience".<sup>9</sup> This can be described as an illusionistic "intangible image"<sup>10</sup> resulting from the formal relationships established within a given defined area be it the framed canvas of a painting, the mass of an architectural structure, or a stage. Conventionally, the stage, the book or the illustration, depicts or otherwise suggests, a domain which does not coincide with its actual physical limits, a mental construct on the part of the spectator or reader from the visual clues that he receives. Illustration allows us to re-conceive space, to "notice our own noticing".

In the Western tradition of illusion, the beholder is, as stated earlier called upon to infer three-dimensional forms from flat surfaces, to imagine an unseen side of a figure, and to supplement the information given. Although book art belongs to this tradition, it has special obstacles to contend with. The page is even flatter than a painting's surface; images on it are often created out of, and bounded by black lines, although in real life, we do not see such lines around objects; and captions,

balloons of speech, or other intrusions of text, although, they make the picture's content more intelligible, detract from its aesthetic and representational claims.

One of the most useful conventions for sustaining the illusion is that of a frame surrounding the illustration, because it tends to associate the illustration with painting's representational effect. This pictorial tradition of making a "window in a book"<sup>11</sup> in children's book illustration is the mainstream. It is not the only one: images in books may be purely decorative, or emblematic like the images of isolated objects that often appear in alphabet or counting books. Elaine Haxton's book A Parrot in a Flame Tree (1968) is the Australian version of the old rhyme "On the First Day of Christmas" where the partridge in a pear tree became a parrot in a flame tree in this book. The illustrations do not however, make a successful children's book because Elaine Haxton is only concerned with decorative qualities of each animal, bird or plant, and each page resembles a striking, brilliant poster and lacks the continuity of story.

The most common decorative elements used in children's book illustration are worldly objects such as flowers, scrolls or feathers, although pure pattern, geometric shapes, or curved lines may occasionally be used as decoration. Normally most man-made objects in our environment are constructed on simple lines. The decorated

object is, therefore, automatically provided with a frame or limit beyond which the eye need not stray.<sup>12</sup>

Although elaborate frames around illustrations are now rather rare, they are among the oldest of book art conventions; examples of fifteenth and sixteenth century work can be seen in the New York Pierpont Morgan Library. Frames sometimes enclosed eighteenth century book illustration and similar examples reappeared in the work of Walter Crane in the 1860's.

Walter Crane's concept of fantasy followed a perception of the decorative potential of images and within this limit, his work was endlessly inventive and consistently graceful. Most of Crane's illustrations stressed decoration at the expense of three-dimensional illusion; images were surrounded with an ornamental border or incorporated a title or portion of text(fig 4). His imagery was based on a large variety of motifs which were mainly floral, and a limited number of human prototypes. He especially favoured an adult version of the Kate Greenaway child languidly "aesthetic" and completely lacking in facial variety. The frame and overall design shown in his work evokes the Arts and Crafts Movement tiles produced at that time. Frames enjoyed popularity right through the end of the century under the combined influence of Art Nouveau and the Kelmscott Press in England.

The Kelmscott Books even more than Crane's, possessed a visual unity that did much to stimulate a new consciousness in book design. In Australia, D.H. Souter and George Lambert were strongly influenced by "art nouveau" and Walter Crane in particular. That this was the style of the times may be seen by comparing Lambert's decorative panels in The Spirit of the Bushfire (1898) with some of Souter's long narrow illustrations bordering the text in Bubbles (1899).

The wide, ornate borders draw overtly on the medieval illuminated border and other illustrators exploited this strain. In the border by W.H. Robinson for Anderson's Fairy Tales (1899) (fig 5) the assymetrical placing of the illustration is a departure from the literal frame idea, while the caricatured faces in the Art Nouveau swirls are another link between old and new styles. In the 1920's the frame reappeared, notably in the black-and-white drawings Kay Neilson did for Anderson's Fairy Tales in 1924. The illustrations to Andrew Lang's "Colour" Fairy Books illustrated by H.J. Ford's imaginative line drawings often used a frame and even Arthur Rackham occasionally employed one.

In The King and the Golden River (1851) Richard Doyle drew unhewn tree branches as frames. George Cruickshank's tree/frames (fig 6) contributed to the illusion of depth while marking three distinct "time zones",

or phases of the narrative in his etchings for "Jack and the Beanstalk" (1853). Kate Greenaway's floral garlands do not at all fence off, or separate, the illustration from the whole space of the page as some frames do. Instead, the delicate flat wreaths integrate the whole page incorporating the white space outside, as well as within, into the design. Treating the frame not as a boundary, but as a part of the overall illustration, artists began to break the frame allowing some part of the illustration proper to extend beyond it, for example, the plume of a cap.

Occasionally illustrators drew not on their art's affinity with painting, but on another artistic field: they emphasised the dramatic function of illustration by framing their pictures with the curtain or architecture of a stage. This is not an outmoded convention: one of Maurice Sendak's illustrations for The Juniper Tree (1973) (fig 7) has a curtain pulled to one side, and in several there is a discreet use of architecture - the edge of a wall, the arch of a ceiling - at one or more edges of the picture. Windows, paintings and stages, all use curtains, but each differs generally in the depth of the view framed. Emma Boyd's delightful domestic scene in Waratah Rhymes for Young Australians (1891) (fig 8) by L.A. Meredith uses the curtained window frame and the open door to show the reader a small view of outside colonial life. Maurice Sendak's Outside Over There (1981) uses windows to frame another story. The viewer looks across, or through the text and

into the pictures. Such mental gymnastics are part and parcel of perceiving pictures in illustrated works.

The structural elements in an illustration can work together to support its symbolism. The final page of Attilio Mussino's illustrated edition of Collodi's The Adventures of Pinocchio (1969) has a small picture (fig 9) which functions like the final freeze-frame in a film, to define the protagonist's ultimate situation. The picture is partially enclosed in a frame rather like a proscenium arch.<sup>13</sup> Two lively figures, Gepetto and the boy Pinocchio has become, lean into the picture from the right. Gepetto's pointing index finger directs our attention to Pinocchio's former puppet self, now leaning heavily against a chair. Its life gone, the puppet's skeleton-like frame is collapsed in the traditional bow of the performer at curtain time. The image of the puppet has been the central repeated motif of the entire illustrated book and readers will be ready to look with interest at his last bow. The circular clock-face draws our attention to the importance of this final magical moment in which the conflicts in the story have been at last resolved: his puppet nature left finally behind, Pinocchio has become an independent human being. Illustrations such as fig 9, have gone beyond mere "decoration" by the illustrator and become a form of storytelling. This progression through the narrative medium -- as the illustration becomes a "story", then it begins to belong to theatre, story, painting or film.



The concern up to now has been, according to Gombrich the needs of illustrators "to make and to match"; to invent and to imitate - both nature and other artists. This dual impulse to construe and construct in children's lives is clear, they seek to determine the boundaries between the possible and the impossible, between the actual and the imagined. This boundary is not an absolute one since much that we imagined does become actual. The book illustrator can draw upon the child's eagerness to explore the boundaries noting the actual and enjoying the imaginary.

Children's book illustration is also influenced by the fact that it is not just the illustrator's vision translated onto the page, but the illustrator's vision of what he or she conceives of as a child's vision of the world and powers of imagination - a vision that children can respond to, a way of initiating a child into a community of interpreters and "imagers".

The purpose of this chapter has been to focus on making a match between the illustration and our visual experience of the world. The degree of illusion we accept depends on a host of cultural factors. In discussing book art in terms of aiming to present an "illusion" of "virtual experience", it is within this "virtual" space created by the illustrator that the action of the story is depicted.

The audience notices the way the scene and the characters are revealed in dress, in gesture and in physical relations (among other codes) their attitudes, intentions and desires. The illustrator, like a theatre director helps the watcher/ the reader, interpret and formulate ways of making all the details fall into a coherent pattern. The illustrator helps define, describe and limit the world of the story.

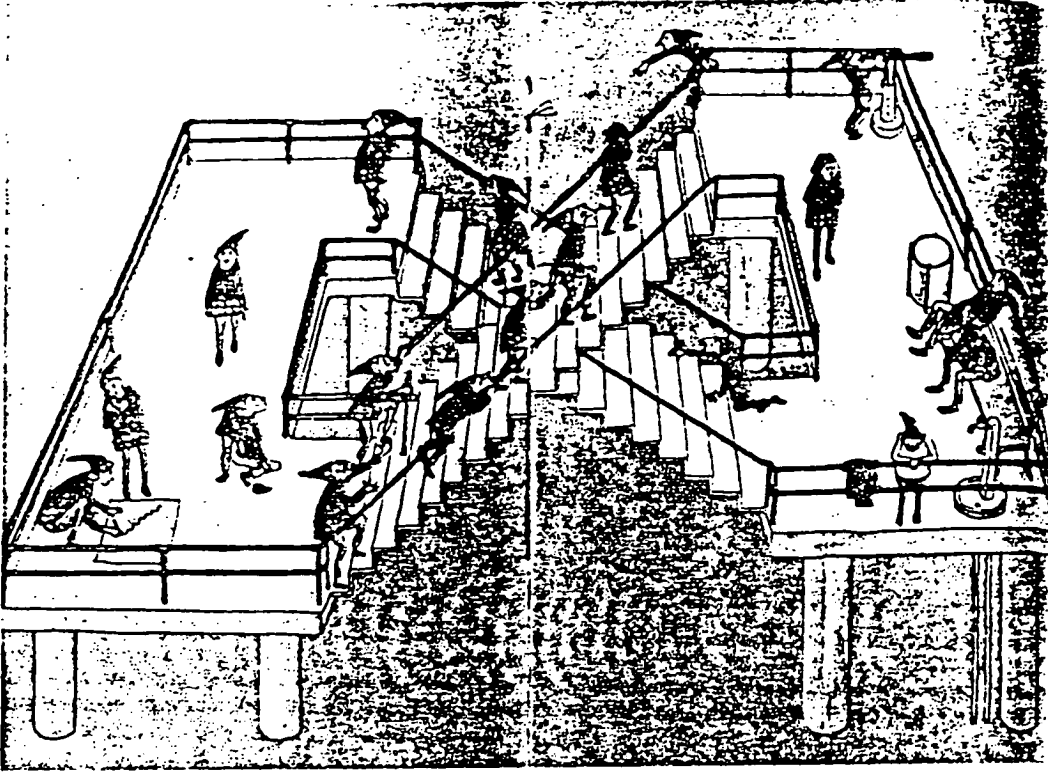


Fig. 2. Impossible Picture, Topsy Turvies, Anno (1970)

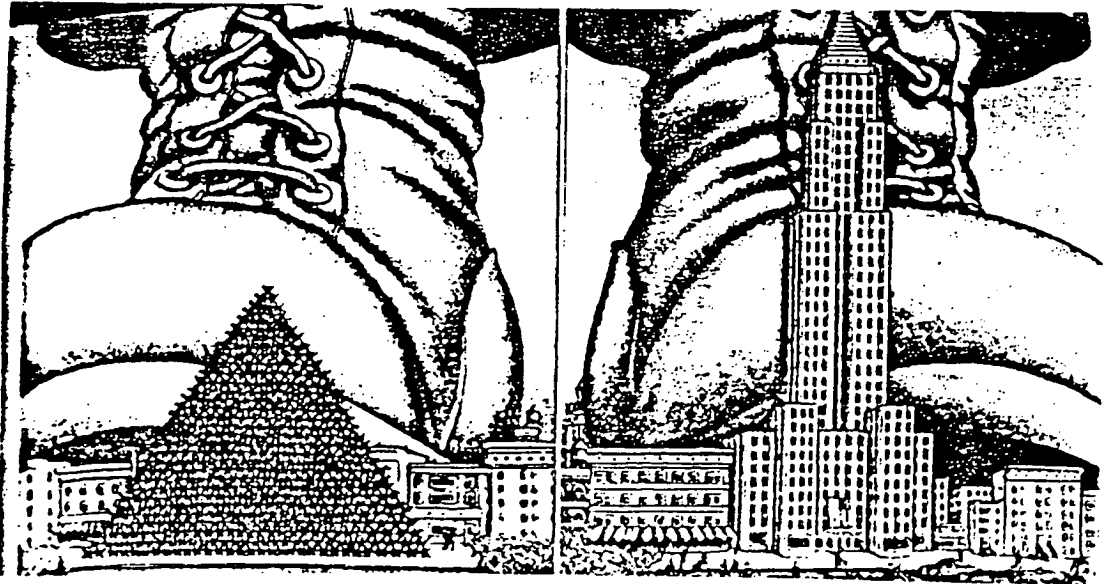


Fig. 3. Richard Egielski 's illustration for Sid and Sol, Yorinks



Fig. 4. Frontispiece for The Baby's Own Aesop, Crane (1887)



Fig. 5. Elaborate border by W. H. Robinson for Fairy Tales, Anderson (1899)

Fig. 6. Tree Frames by G. Cruikshank in "Jack and the Beanstalk" (1853)

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Fig. 7. "Rapunzel" from The Juniper Tree, Sendak (1973)

Fig. 8. Emma Boyd's domestic scene, Waratah Rhymes for Young Australians, Meredith (1891)

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Fig. 9. A Mussino's "Pinocchio" in The Adventures of Pinocchio, Collodi. (1969)

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## CHAPTER FOUR

### ILLUSTRATION AND ITS RELATIONSHIP TO THE TEXT

In writing about illustration and its relationship to the text I have found it necessary to cite titles drawn from a wide variety of sources. This seemed justified in that the books cited are used as "bench marks" for the criteria to be used in looking at the Australian titles examined in later chapters.

Through the ages man has developed the capacity to use shapes symbolically to suggest ideas and concepts in pictures and writing. Ward and Fox (1984) state:

When the words and pictures interact in a mutually dependent fashion, a believable world is created and the characters come to life.<sup>1</sup>

It is often difficult to define the qualities in a satisfying illustration for a children's book and, in practice, those qualities which are unsuitable are sometimes easier to pinpoint and describe. Art is a means of communication, of course, and in a child's picture book, the illustrator whether in colour or line, is helping to focus the reader's attention as well as to interpret, tell or retell the story that has been written or developed.



The illustrator will also add to his or her pictures those extra little details which contribute to a coherent interpretation although unmentioned in the text, for instance the spoon by the honey jar, the chintz curtains at the windows, the picture on the wall, all of which children look for and find so entrancing. Illustrations in a book can, and do, exist in their own right. However, there are occasions when the story they retell is a rather flimsy and unsubstantial affair. Generally speaking, in an outstanding picture book the illustrations are not there just to bolster up a rather meaningless little story.

It is important here to draw the distinction between a picture book and a storybook. If we take a typical picture book format to be thirty-two pages, there is insufficient space for any unnecessary detail. The artist has to be extremely disciplined in the choice and sequence of illustration and in the way details are selected which let the reader/viewer interpret the story in a coherent and enjoyable fashion. As Edward Ardizzone (1959) writes:

The text can only give bone to the story. The pictures, on the other hand, must do more than just illustrate the story. They must elaborate it. Characters have to be created pictorially because there is no space to do so verbally in the text. Besides the settings and characters, the subtleties of mood and moment have to be suggested.

Unlike the storybook which expresses sight and sound largely through words, a picture book tends to separate the two,

representing the sight by a picture and the sound mainly by words. Huck and Young (1961) state:

the fusion of both pictures and text are<sub>3</sub>  
essential for the unity of presentation.

By presenting visually, instead of representing by words, a picture book becomes naturally more of a dramatic or filmic experience. Cianciolo stresses this kinship between picture books and theatrical presentations:

When one looks through a picture book, one  
should have the feeling that he<sub>4</sub> is sitting  
through a theatrical spectacle.

For young children, an illustration needs to spring to life out of the pages of their picture books with all the spontaneous freshness and intensity which is a part of children's lives, while at the same time artists must use all their skill, experience, and originality to enchant and woo them.

In storybooks, illustrators must have the "quality" of an author within them. They must understand what the author is saying, visualise the situations that are in the story, imagine the characters and have insight into what the reader can understand and enjoy. The illustrations must be of a story-telling kind. In most storybooks, the illustrations decorate the text, understanding can be gained without them, but there are exceptions to the rule. There are illustrations in books which help readers to create the visual images, and help them go beyond the printed word.

Margaret Holder's sketch of the "Cat Woman" from Patricia Wrightson's Down to Earth (1965) and Antony Maitland's one and a half page portrayal of Smith moving up the underground tunnel (fig. 10) in Smith (1967) by Leon Garfield, (p. 108 - 109) goes beyond decoration of the printed word and the illustration becomes a narrative medium.

Successful artists/illustrators, of course, speak to children in their own particular idiom, and each one will have something a little different to give to the child's interpretation of the story being illustrated. If, however, children are going to understand what the picture is telling them, the artist must know something about the way in which children interpret the world and feel about the people and objects in it. Pictures, like stories, can speak to children at more than one level, containing as it were hidden secrets, which only gradually reveal themselves after several readings and reflection. The emotion that is conveyed by a picture, whether it is gaiety, compassion, tenderness, anger or fear, must appear to the child to be genuine and depicted in such a way that a child can cope with and interpret its meaning, either consciously or unconsciously, for his own needs and purposes, but above all to compose an enjoyable story from the picture sequence.

Children today, are less likely to have trouble in interpreting illustration. With the introduction of television, children have no doubt become used to

interpreting visual images. As Gombrich (1960) suggests, they have become part of a visual tradition. Allowing a message to work may not require one to be conscious of the careful planning and technique used by the artist. Maurice Sendak uses a "zoom" technique to get the reader from Max's room to the place where the wild things are. The pictures, of course, become larger as Max's imagination takes over, and some of them refuse to be entirely confined by the initial picture frames. Indeed, the frames progressively disappear and then reappear as Max returns to his actual bedroom and supper. Ron Brooks' illustrations for The Bunyip of Berkeley Creek (1973) begin as small sketches inside a frame and gradually loom larger as the story progresses and the identity and characteristics of the Bunyip are accepted and justified to the reader. In these instances and many others, of course, the young reader is not expected to be consciously aware of these skilled techniques.

It is also difficult to think of Wanda Gag's Millions of Cats (1928) without its frequent verse refrain about "the millions and billions and trillions of cats." At the same time, the rhythmical picture sequence of the gnomish little man (fig 11) wandering over the rolling hills and down the winding roads followed by all those cats is inseparable from the repetitive text. The action in the text and the action in the illustrations together contribute to a more powerful work which stimulates the readers'

linguistic and visual imaginations.

Pictures can not only reflect the basic moods of the story, they can also help create it. The perfect harmony of words and pictures in Robert McCloskey's Time of Wonder (1957) captures in their "virtual" space the changing mood of the Maine coast.

soft, gray and green watercolours portray a foggy morning in a forest so quiet, <sup>5</sup> you could hear "the sound of growing ferns".

Illustrations not only aid in creating the basic mood of a story, but they also help portray convincing character development. There is no mistaking the mischievous Blinky Bill in the Blinky Bill books (1933), or the devilish quality of the incorrigible and exuberant Madeline in the Madeline books (1939), or the independence of Chibi in Crow Boy (1955). Unfortunately, some illustrations in children's books show characters completely devoid of expression and personality. Characterisation in the picture must correspond to that presented in the language. Obviously, if in the story the characters laugh, cry, look grubby and untidy as children often do, this should be shown.

It is important that pictures and text must be harmoniously synchronised if the story is to succeed. Successful artists not only capture the mood and feeling of a story, they are also careful not to confuse children by

inconsistency with the text. The indifferent artist, or publisher, sometimes does not even ensure that his or her scenes and colours fit the tale or that the right picture is next to the incident that it is supposed to illustrate. In Peter Pavey's book I'm Taggerty Toad (1980) the toad depicted in the story is green, whereas many children would know that toads are brown. This may have been indifference concerning accuracy on the part of the illustrator, or perhaps, in creating a fantasy world he depicted the toad as he thought it should be in that world!

There are a lot of disciplines that the illustrator has to work within, but it seems the most effective illustrations are those that are most completely co-ordinated with the character and pace of the story, where careful attention has been paid to the relationships between what is described verbally and what is expressed visually and where, consideration has been given to such details as the book's style, shape and format.<sup>6</sup> There is a contrast between the different pace of text and illustration shown in Pamela Allen's Bertie and the Bear and Ron Brooks' John Brown, Rose and the Midnight Cat (1977). The theatrical action in Bertie and the Bear is shown through the way the characters and illustrations dramatically move across the page (fig 12) in a bid to save Bertie from being eaten by the Bear. In John Brown, Rose and the Midnight Cat the pace is slower, the illustrations give clues to the loneliness and the isolation of Rose through the neglected state of the

setting.

The primary question concerning the style in illustrated books appears to be one of harmony with the story. The style of art should be judged solely by its appropriateness to the story. The results of research on the topic in the field of what style of illustration is best for children's books, are conflicting and certainly not conclusive. G. LaVerne Freeman and Ruth Sunderlin Freeman (1933) found that children preferred more stylised or decorative pictures in contrast to naturalistic ones.<sup>7</sup> Inez Ramsey (1982) found representational and expressionistic styles were less preferred than photographs or cartoon styles.<sup>8</sup> Mabel Rudisell (1952) reported that under some conditions realism of picture preceded colour as a factor in determining preference.<sup>9</sup> Despite Ramsey's recent work perhaps, Morton Maeter's conclusion (1948) after reviewing several studies in this field still stands:

children's preferences for pictures do not place restrictions on the form or the subject matter which can be used in illustration since other factors appear to influence children's choice.<sup>10</sup>

Among the factors he named, are children's needs, the demands of society and the opinion of experts, and one might like to add fashion to this list.

These studies agree in showing the importance of unity and harmony between the text and the illustration, with each complementing and fitting the other. Examples of

this are shown in the delightful intimacy of Beatrix Potter's illustrations with their soft pastel colours, the loving and appropriately detailed accuracy of her country scenes and animals. Edward Ardizzone in picture books such as Little Tim and the Brave Sea Captain (1979), with his vigorous, sketchy quality, gives children the feeling that the very spirit of the scene has been snatched from a moment in time and held for ever in colour and line. Only the essential details illustrate the adventures of his characters. Nothing could be more expressive or individual than Leslie Brooke's illustrations to his Johnny Crow Picture Books (1903) or Pamela Allen's Who Sank the Boat. Both illustrators bring their animals' personalities to life in an unforgettable way through the humorous expressions and dramatic gestures portrayed in the illustrations.

Just as there is no one style of art best suited for children's literature, so there is no one medium which is to be preferred. Illustrations may be done in brush work, crayon, watercolour, colour lithographs, pastels, collage and woodcuts. On the whole, photographs appear to be less popular with both children and artists than original illustrations though there are exceptions such as Ylla's The Sleepy Lion (1954), Lamorisse's The Red Balloon (1957) and Gulpilil's Stories of the Dreamtime (1979) and The Birirrk (1983). The major question of artistic media then appears to be one of finding a harmony between the story and illustration.



In schools today, it would seem that colour is an important factor in books, and young children typically choose those with coloured pictures in preference to black-and-white unless the book happens to be one containing a well-loved story. Research studies by Richard Bloomer (1960)<sup>11</sup> supports this. While the use of colour alone of course is no guarantee of success, certain artists have made most effective use of colour to convey the mood of the story. In White Snow, Bright Snow (1947), Duvoisin utilised a grey-blue to give the feeling of cold, then emphasised a weather change by contrasting brilliant splashes of red, yellow and white.

The skilful artist will use all sorts of devices to create atmosphere and mood, including the use of colour and space, the size of the pictures, their arrangement and format. Some picture books produce variety by interweaving pictures and text on the same page. Virginia Lee Burton's The Little House (1942) arranges some of the type to follow the pattern of a winding road which appears in her illustrations. But print actually superimposed on a picture is generally found to be confusing to the reader. There is a definite preference for pictures placed on the righthand side of the page, and in the advertising world, space in newspapers and magazines costs more if the righthand page is taken. Hardly surprising since we read from left to right and our books and newspapers open to facilitate this

convention.

The end-papers and title-page can add to the charm and interest of a book while the dust cover, on such books as John Brown, Rose and the Midnight Cat and Robert Ingpen's Voyage of the Poppykettle (1977), is probably the first thing the child or adult notice and so influence the choice. The format of the book is important in creating its total impact. Jeannie Baker's Home in the Sky (1984) is vertical in shape (fig 13) and depicts in collage a tall skyscraper as its central feature. The horizontal shape of Pamela Allen's Bertie and the Bear is quite appropriate for portraying Bertie being chased by the bear through one double page after another.

Other fine details contribute to the making of a quality book. Sometimes the very margins and blank space within a book add to the total impact of the story. In illustrating Crow Boy, Yashima has made skilful use of space to help create the feeling of isolation. In the picture of the school room, (fig 14) Chibi looms large in a foreground of empty space contrasting with the small group of children across the room.

In successful children's books, attention is given to the spacing of the pictures and text so that they do not all appear monotonously in the same place. The variety of the spacing of the sentences adds movement to the

format of Pat Hutchin's Rosie's Walk (1968). The rhythm of picture/text, picture, picture/text and so on allows time for the reader to interpret, imagine and make connections between what is written and visually presented. This illustrates some of the different techniques used by the artist and writer to juxtapose text and pictures. Junko Morimoto, in The White Crane (1983) and The Inch Boy (1984), has presented books beautifully designed in every detail. In The Inch Boy, Morimoto has made effective use of framing either taking up one page with centred text on the other, or extending the illustration to take up one and a half pages and centring the text within the remaining half page. These artistic decisions are not only pleasing to the eye but help create and sustain the flow and atmosphere of the story.

Claire Raynor in an article in the December 1963 edition of Design stresses the importance of the actual physical properties of a book:

The feel of a book and the way it handles, are important to a child. Something that is fragile can distress him a great deal, for he needs to feel that his environment is strong and secure. Something that breaks easily is frightening because it diminishes his trust in the physical world. So a good book from a child's standpoint is strong and will hold its shape. . . the paper pages should be bound together in such a way that the binding will hold them firmly but at the same time will allow the book to be opened flat.<sup>12</sup>

Books are not merely collections of stories and illustrations, they are part and parcel of the very fabric of life. The kinds of stories and illustrations that different readers enjoy will depend on a whole host of things such as: age, experience, interest and moods. Illustrations not only aid in creating the basic mood of a story, but also help portray convincing character development. The way the characters are developed, behave, think, feel and their reactions to different experiences, these give the story its drama and makes things happen. If the characters are portrayed as quite unsubstantial, shadowy figures, untouched by the things that happen to them, oblivious to the passing of time, then the story will be unreal and unsatisfying. The development of characters, for example, Rosie in Rosie's Walk, the sheepdog in John Brown, Rose and the Midnight Cat or Grandma Poss in Possum Magic (1983), both linguistically and visually, is fascinating. The character, Grandma Poss dressed in blue star-studded apron, wearing glasses and scuffs is realistically presented, but she behaves in a magical way. She has all the characteristics of a human, she can ride, read and brushes her teeth as well as display such emotions as worry, happiness and joy. The illustrator Julie Vivas, categorised in this study as a "boundary rider", or in Nan Hunt's terms, a "Kite-flyer", shows Grandma Poss and the other bush creatures in line and water colour paintings whereas the invisible mischievous Hush is shown in faint line drawings (fig 15) ignored by the other creatures and only visible to

Grandma Poss and the readers. This showing through pictures in the examples given, introduces the child reader to the pleasure of noticing and interpreting so that he or she can arrive at a coherent story.

I would suggest that the most successful illustrations become an integral part of the whole work, often having a relationship in which the visual imagery and detail, and the verbal narrative carry independent but harmoniously interrelated experiences and ideas which conform to the style and genre of the story. The best illustrations do not draw attention away from the story, but instead, make it more vivid and believable, offering the reader further ways of making sense of the story.

This chapter has further highlighted the interpretation of details coded in book illustration in both storybooks and picture books. It has attempted to show that early illustration in the storybooks to be studied in this dissertation were mere extensions, perhaps, only decorations of the text. While the art of illustration as it developed, greatly enriched the interpretation of the story, illustrations were not necessary for its understanding. Margaret Holder in illustrating Patricia Wrightson's Down to Earth (1965) used intricate line sketches which greatly added to the understanding of the book, but not all are essential for its interpretation. The text might stand on its own.

Picture books, on the other hand, are books in which the illustrations are designed as an integral part of the story. In picture books, both media carry the story and invite the reader's participation. Picture books such as those illustrated by Peter Pavey and Ron Brooks reflect the trend in Australia towards a greater narrative role for visual presentation in books for children of all ages. In their work, representative of recent developments, it is difficult to separate the contributions of words and pictures, they operate in a harmonious concert.

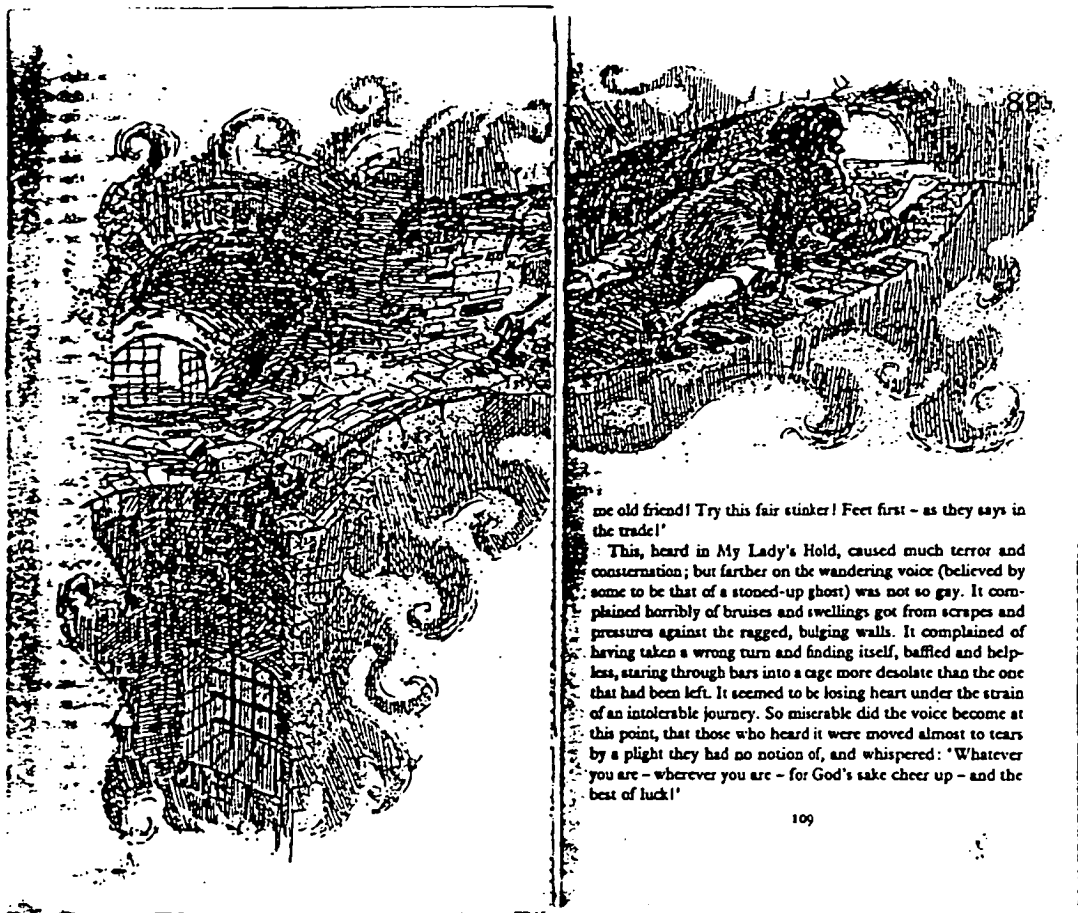


Fig. 10. A. Maitland's Smith in the tunnel, Smith, Garfield (1967)



Fig. 11. Rhythmical curves reflecting repetitive text, Millions of Cats, Gág (1928)

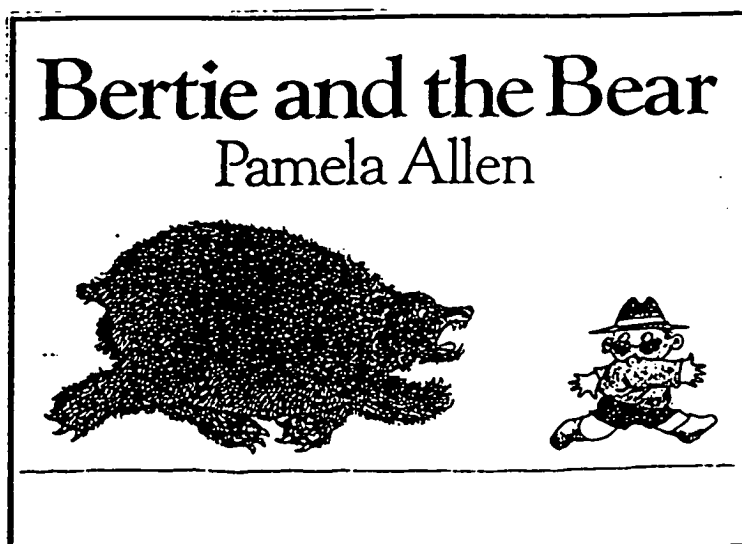


Fig. 12. Theatrical action, Bertie and the Bear, Allen (1983)

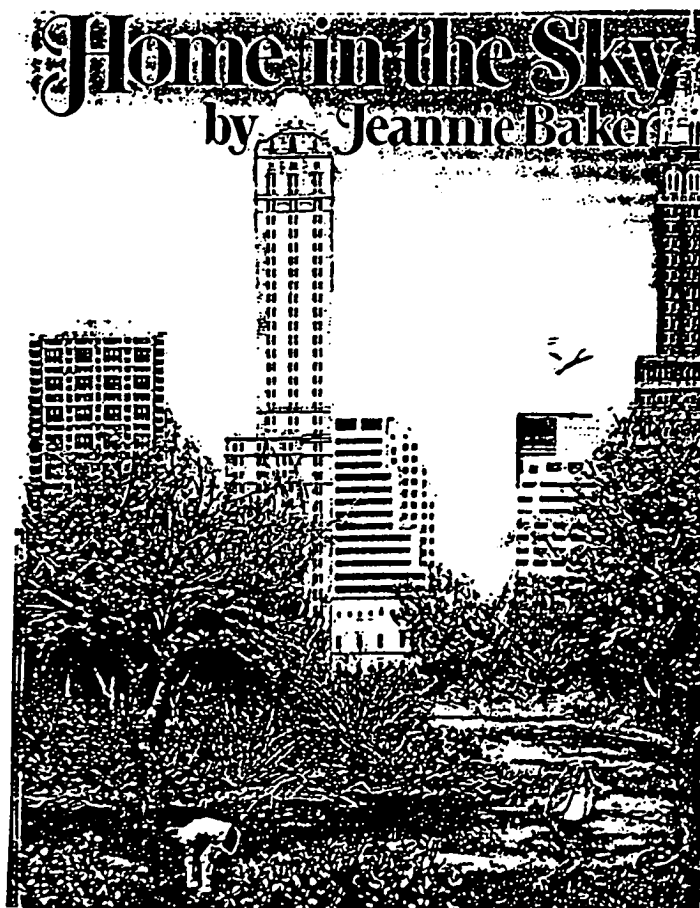


Fig. 13. Vertical format, Home in the Sky, Baker (1984)



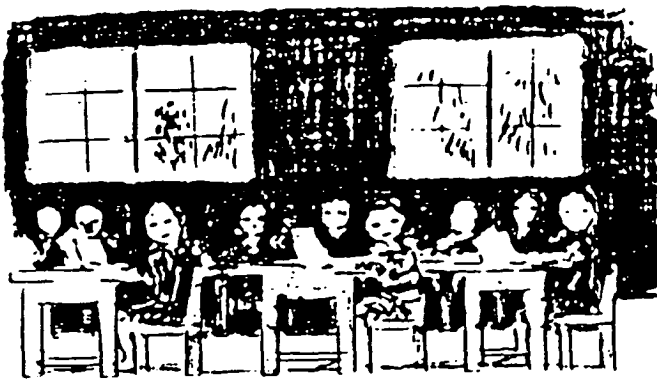


Fig. 14. Use of space conveys Chibi's loneliness and isolation, Crow Boy, Yashima (1955)

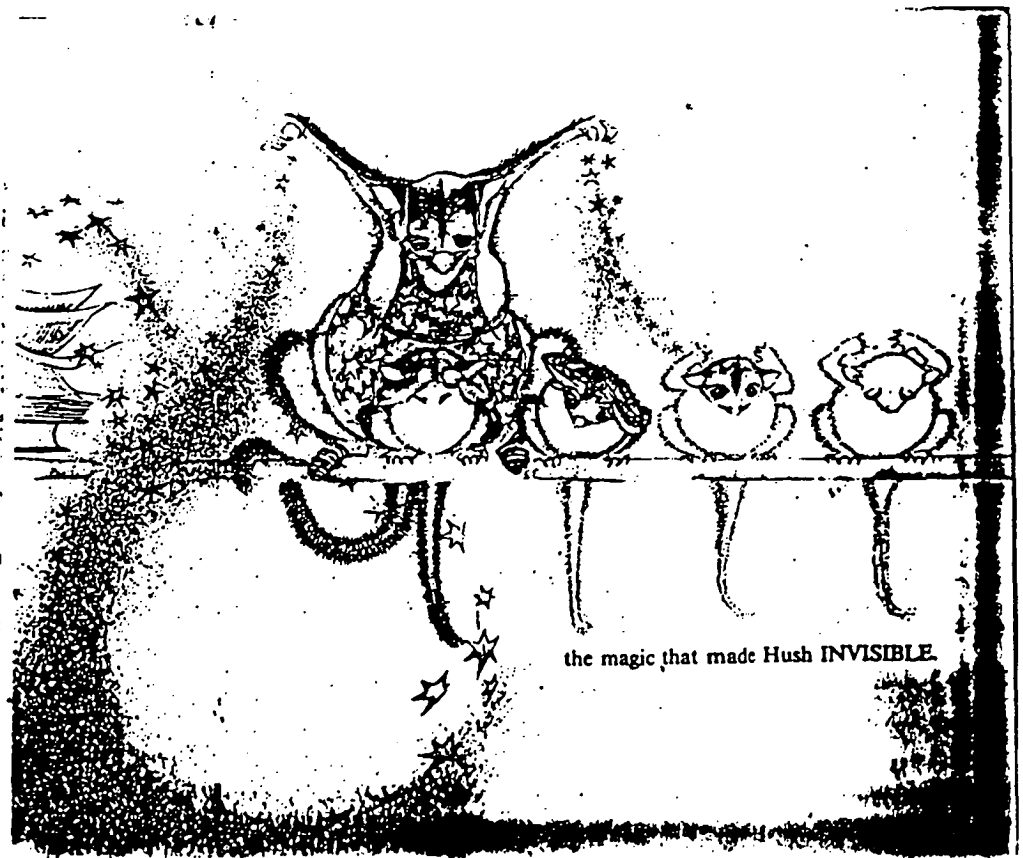


Fig. 15. Creating illusion of invisibility, Possum Magic, Fox (1983)

# NOTES

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## CHAPTER FIVE

### IDENTIFICATION AND SELECTION OF AUSTRALIAN ILLUSTRATORS

To apply what has been said to Australian writing and illustrating for children is to make the point that fantasy does not seem to have flourished with much vigour until recently, although, the best of our children's books, it might be claimed, have been inspired by fantasy, which may seem strange for such a pragmatic society.

Perhaps the arid Australian landscape and the consequent lifestyles, did not encourage fancifulness. To appreciate the richness of Australian children's literature and to make an appropriate selection from it, it is important to trace its development. The literature available for children reflected, of course, the attitudes of society. Books have always and everywhere been viewed as instruments for transmitting the mores of the culture and for inculcating attitudes and values. Colonial children, for example, were treated as miniature adults, not as developing personalities, important in their own right. Earlier examples such as Rosalie's Reward: or The Fairy Treasure (1890) by "Gumsucker" and Australian Fairy Tales (1897) by Atha Westbury failed to capture the magic of fairy-tale in an Australian culture. The European fairy-tale, had not yet (if it ever did) become a naturalised denizen of the Australian imagination and sat

incongruously in the Australian setting.

As the didactic and dour changed to the fanciful and 'precious' and as adults became more aware of children's demands, the influences of society upon literature are evident. The changing status and view of children is reflected in the literature available to them both overseas and in Australia. Before the turn of the century, noteworthy examples such as Whitfield's The Spirit of the Bushfire (1898) and Ethel Pedley's Dot and the Kangaroo (1899) were more like genuine 'fantasy' work. Genuine in the sense that the Australian experience was in a mutually creative interchange with an Australian imagination and experience.

In the rapidly changing world of twentieth century Australian culture, the child was becoming increasingly important as an individual. The 'world of childhood' grew in significance as a unique 'place and time'. The new philosophy held that childhood was to be enjoyed and the child's imaginative powers 'valued and encouraged'. The importance of childhood made it imperative that books be designed for children. Technological progress made it possible to produce books of outstanding beauty and quality. The production of these books not only benefited from improved techniques in the field of graphic arts, but also from the acceptance of an artistic tradition contributed to by such fine artists such as Tom Roberts, Russell

Drysdale and Hans Heysen who captured the experience of Australian life, and were becoming established in Australian society and life in this period.

In Australia when tracing the development of fantasy illustration, it is obvious that the early settlers did not succeed in transplanting a culture, although the evidence is strong that they tried to do so. Yet despite all their efforts Australia did not become another British Isles culture. This land has its own personality which prevailed and would not be vanquished. What emerged was born of both the old life and the new: it was a merging of culture and literatures.

In Australia, it took until the 1930's and 1940's for the writers and illustrators, to respond to what has been referred to by such artists as Sydney Long,<sup>1</sup> as the "aboriginal quality of the landscape". Australian writers and illustrators now sought to express the spirit of the land and to explore the connections among Australians and between them and their environment, whereas authors and illustrators in the previous decades were preoccupied with the natural history view. These writers and illustrators such as Norman Lindsay and Dorothy Wall used flora and fauna to illustrate various aspects of human nature with characters such as Bunyip Bluegum or Blinky Bill - a toy-coy set of creatures giving a dismissive view of childish life.

Initially, Australian writers and illustrators relied heavily on European fairy-tale and fantasy for their style and material and one wonders why? When we consider historical examples of fantasy in such books as Kipling's Puck of Pook's Hill, which explores the past times of Britain we note that Australia did not have "time" in its history it was thought, because it was such a 'young' country. Nor did we use myth, perhaps because we did not recognise initially the existence and place of our own myths.

In focusing on the development of fantasy illustration, indeed to appreciate its development in Australian children's literature, it is important to include in this study, a chapter on the pre-World War Two period to look at the characteristics, preoccupations and concerns. The work of Frank Mahony, Ida Rentoul Outhwaite, May Gibbs, Norman Lindsay and Dorothy Wall are studied for example, in the light of technique, style, and characters. In these works, there was definitely the first sign of a peculiarly Australian imagination in the use of language and the depiction of characters. The development shown through techniques in printing had a great effect on these illustrators and they exploited the new opportunities.

The advent of the Depression is reflected in the small number of children's books of any kind published in Australia during this time. The war which followed brought

with it a paper shortage which had two detrimental effects on children's books. The paper itself was often thick and coarse, and when bound in paper-covered boards the book rapidly fell apart. But books of originality occur, quite unexpectedly, such as The Way of the Whirlwind written by Mary Durack and illustrated by her sister, Elizabeth. This book was published in Sydney by Consolidated Press in 1941.

I have also included in this study, Frank Davison's Children of the Dark People, published originally in 1936, but later revised by the author and the revised edition was published in 1959. Although this book does not specifically fall into my particular focus of study even though I will be referencing the revised edition, I have included it because I see its emergence as a significant work of fantasy by Davison and the illustrator Pixie O'Harris. I see both these books as the 'cultural link' between the White Australians' view of the Aboriginal culture and its Dreamtime and the Aboriginal view of their cultural heritage. Both the Duracks, as well as Davison and O'Harris tried to show their interpretation of the Aboriginal culture through their portrayal of characters in the Dreamtime, with Elizabeth Durack making hers more convincing. The world that is portrayed in both books is uniquely Australian yet the universality of the initiation of childhood is there to be appreciated by all. The changing attitude of Australian authors and illustrators towards Aboriginal Australia as a source of fantasy is

clearly observed in their work.

The end of the Second World War saw many changes in children's book production and publishing houses, with the establishment of such firms as Georgian House, F.W. Cheshire and Longmans. The role of children's book editors became established and the importance placed on the (1965) educative value of children's books had resulted in clearer and more demanding critical standards and an acceptance of the importance of children's imagination. The year 1945 saw the establishment of the Children's Book Awards in Australia. Although it took until the 1970's for those concerned with children's book publishing in Australia to achieve the techniques necessary to produce picture books of a standard equal to the numerous books being imported, success came earlier with the storybook which was, nonetheless illustrated if only in a limited fashion.

Illustrators such as Margaret Holder and Annette MacArthur-Onslow contributed a great deal to illustration of storybooks in Australia. They both used their black and white sketches to extend the texts and give another dimension to the fantasy works of Nan Chauncy and Patricia Wrightson, and in Annette MacArthur-Onslow's case, her techniques were extended to include colour in her own published works such as Uhu (1969) or Minnie (1971). Both illustrators attempted to use book illustration as a narrative medium and not merely as decoration in the works



they illustrated.

In the seventies, Patricia Wrightson introduced for the first time in Australian fantasy, mythical creatures derived from Aboriginal myth. In creating these works of fantasy, she drew on her personal experience of aborigines and their world-view in interpreting this traditional folk-lore. She created creatures that could become part of the Australian city child's view and sought to give an entry point to the mythic worlds of Aborigines. To enter Aboriginal myth the reader needs the vehicle of a work of art, and that vehicle can be classified for us as a fantasy. In Patricia Wrightson's book An Older Kind of Magic one of the city children says:

The spirits live in the land, have always lived in this land. They are not European spirits, they are not fairies, they don't have little gossamer wings, they don't dance in mushroom rings. Why would they go away simple because we choked them to death with concrete and bitumen? No, they are still here, they are right here, right in the middle of Sydney.<sup>2</sup>

It is this concern by illustrators and writers to relate to us the mythic landscape of Aboriginal culture, and to allow us to "enter" the mystery of the Dreamtime as they understand it that has caused the Aboriginal people to be so concerned to tell it from their point of view. Many are concerned that their culture will be lost through assimilation and so they have chosen to write and illustrate their stories of the Dreamtime. For the Aboriginal people the land has special meaning; features of which are

reminders of those Giant Beings of the Dreamtime. Aboriginal illustrators such as Dick Roughsey and Gulpilil have created a unique style in presenting the Aboriginal culture to Australian children.

One development in the 1970's was the dramatic increase world-wide in children's picture books. The climate after the Second World War and subsequent years, was favourable in most Western countries for the production of children's books of a high standard. The establishment of Children's Book Councils and the changing concept of children's libraries heightened the importance of quality in Australian children's picture books. Technological advances had been made in printing, particularly in colour reproduction and these advances not only made colour printing cheaper but also competitive and more able to reproduce the artist's original images. Less than twenty years after the Picture Book of the Year Award was created, a rich array of beautiful books began to appear.

In selecting illustrators amongst those who provided the rich array of picture books of the 1970's, these five namely, Ron Brooks, Deborah and Kilmeny Niland, Robert Ingpen and Peter Pavey stand out as distinguished illustrators. Composing their own work, or illustrating for other writers, they chose to illustrate works of fantasy. It is for this reason, that they have been included in this study. Each illustrator's work is different in technique

and style, and each have developed their own style of fantasy illustration. Ron Brooks, Peter Pavey and Robert Ingpen have created mythical creatures such as dragons, bunyips, or gnomes in a unique interpretation moving in and out of a believable world not always identified as typically Australian. Deborah and Kilmeny Niland have a very distinct style in their interpretation of the fairytales collected by Jean Chapman. They have used light, delicate colours to depict grotesque figures in sometimes horrific poses. Their portrayal of "Little Red Riding Hood" in Tell Me Another Tale (1976) has been compared by Marcie Muir (1982) with Sendak's artistic style in his character "Max" in Where the Wild Things Are.

When looking closely at Australian children's book illustration as we do in this study of fantasy, and see how the writers and illustrators achieve the final product -- the book -- we are made aware of the tremendous effort made in this production. In its brief history, Australian children's book illustration has responded to and reflected the changing nature of art, illustration, storyline, and children's interests. The comparison between the early Australian works and those of the last decade is staggering, and within the last few years subtle changes are evident in the works of illustrators. Comparisons offered by the juxtaposition of pieces of work, within one illustrator's collection, show the impact of new influences and ideas and the following chapters set out to highlight the development

of fantasy illustration in this frame of reference.

NOTES

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2. Wrightson, P. An Older Kind of Magic, Ringwood :  
Puffin, 1972.

## CHAPTER SIX

### AUSTRALIAN FANTASY ILLUSTRATION PRE-WORLD WAR II

Our first writers, were not native born, most were new settlers. Yet, they established themes and motifs which our present writers are using still, for although our children's literature shows a development, it is noticeable that certain themes reoccur. In the first sixty years or so, we imported the fairy story, the family story, fantasy in the image of Alice in Wonderland, the sentimental girl's story and most robust of all, the boys' adventure story.

Australian children's illustrated literature began in 1857 with the publication of The Australian Picture Pleasure Book, perhaps fittingly, an illustrated factual book. After the appearance of this book about fifty Australian books for children were published by the end of the century.

Towards the end of the nineteenth century the burgeoning of national feeling with ideas of federation constantly in the foreground gave an impetus to literary and artistic achievement. This was apparent also in the creation of children's books.

Fairy stories in the European tradition started appearing in the 1870's, and during the last three decades of the century about eight books were published before Dot and the Kangaroo. Some of these books were apparently influenced by Alice's Adventures in Wonderland (1865). Of them all, only Dot and the Kangaroo stood the test of time. The book presents some significant aspects of the period in terms of its subject and the author's and illustrator's attitude towards the Australian bush and ecology.

Two notable illustrators D.H. Souter and F.P. Mahony created images of fantasy inspired by authors such as Ethel Turner and Ethel Pedley. D.H. Souter worked for the publisher William Brooks. His first work was in a monthly newspaper called The Children's Newspaper (1899). Souter did the entire artwork for the paper, including advertisements, headings and so on. Souter was essentially a black and white artist. Like most artists of the period he was strongly influenced by art nouveau, and by Walter Crane in particular.

In 1900, Ethel Turner's book Gum Leaves, was illustrated by Souter and published by William Brooks. The many illustrations were in black and white, and the layout of the book on its excellent quality white paper was unusually effective. Some of the illustrations appeal for their decorative qualities.

Souter also illustrated more conventionally, R. McMillan's The Voyage of the Monsoon, a book for boys published in 1900. These books showed the influence of Walter Crane. It is true that one feels with Souter's work (fig 16) that the drawings adorn the text rather than complement it. This was also a criticism made of the work of Walter Crane.

Walter Crane admitted that his 'toy books' were 'the vehicle for my ideas in furniture and decoration'.<sup>1</sup> The relentless patterning in Crane's compositions, the firm outlines, the sense of occasions arranged into wallpaper friezes, made him a byword for stylish quality. Crane's concept of fantasy followed his perception of the decorative potential of images, and within this limit, his work was endlessly inventive and consistently graceful. Nevertheless, although Souter's illustrations are criticised for these reasons, he is still recognised as one of the most accomplished of all the illustrators of children's books in Australia, though his work belongs to an earlier period.

In the first hundred years from 1841, many writers used the elements of fantasy to produce a few gleams of wonder and mirth. Before the turn of the century, noteworthy examples such as Whitfield's Spirit of the Bushfire (fig 17) and Ethel Pedley's Dot and the Kangaroo were published.



Dot and the Kangaroo written by Ethel Pedley and illustrated by Frank Mahony is not the only book which presents a didactic notion of conservation and the accusation of the exploitation of the bush animals by white Australians. But, it is most persistent in this direction among other books of fantasy in this period. This concern about conservation has, in fact, been a preoccupation in Australian fantasy up to now.

Dot and the Kangaroo is without doubt one of the most charming books that could be put into the hands of a child. It is admirably illustrated by Frank P. Mahony, who seems to have entered thoroughly into the spirit of this beautiful journey into the animal world of Australia.<sup>2</sup> The story is altogether Australian.

It is hard today, to share the contemporary admiration of Mahony's illustrations for Dot and the Kangaroo. When they first appeared the appeal of these illustrations lay in their sincere attempt to interpret the story from a child's point of view; the incidents and animal characters were depicted in a manner a child could understand and enjoy. The story and the illustrations captured the essence of pioneering in the bush so well that they have entered the Australian ethos.

To the children of Australia, in the hope of enlisting their sympathies for the many beautifully, amiable and frolicsome creatures of their fair land; whose extinction through ruthless destruction is being surely accomplished.<sup>3</sup>

In spite of its digressions, the plot is firmly woven around a central idea. The lost girl finds refuge and security in

the person of the kangaroo, who, while remaining true to her animal nature, has endearing and noble qualities. The fantasy is consistently conceived, for instance, Dot's ability to converse with the bush animals is explained by the "berries of understanding" brought to her by the kangaroo, and her "wonderland" has the same internal logic that Carroll gave to his creation. As with "Peter Rabbit", this theme of the child being separated from the family circle and then being brought back to its warmth and love, meets the young reader's need for security and acceptance.

Mahony grasped the poignancy of the scene (fig 18) where Dot's father is stopped just in time from shooting the kangaroo, and conveys the warm affection with which Dot waves good-bye. Like Sir John Tenniel, Mahony saw Dot and the Kangaroo as an inspiration to create images of fantasy. Sir John Tenniel illustrated Lewis Carroll's fantasy Alice's Adventures in Wonderland and Through the Looking-Glass. Carroll's fantasy was based on the logical responses of a matter-of-fact child to absurd and surreal stimuli, and Tenniel's illustrations repeat this antithesis with their authoritative depiction of dreamlike images.

Tenniel's immortal visualisation of the White Rabbit in Alice's Adventures in Wonderland was an early depiction of the anthropomorphised animal. Although animals have always figured in literature and fables, often symbolising some human or abstract quality, those of the

late nineteenth century differed from their predecessors in being endowed with almost exclusively human characteristics.

In spite of its strong resemblance to Alice's Adventures in Wonderland, however, Ethel Pedley's book Dot and the Kangaroo does not adopt dream machinery to bridge a gap between reality and fantasy. Dot's world is presented as an actual world of the Australian bush. The author's and illustrator's presentation of bush life is well supported by actuality in terms of its scientific and realist approach. The animals are not humanised in the manner of Kenneth Grahame's characters in The Wind in the Willows or Norman Lindsay's animals in The Magic Pudding. Their appearance, behaviour and characteristics are truly that of animals. Ann Swinfen argues that:

The best animal fantasies thus always operate on two levels: the animals serve as mirrors or models for human behaviour, but at the same time they are also true animals in their own right. The proportions between the two may vary, but both are always there.<sup>4</sup>

Pedley's achievement in Australian fantasy lies in her serious approach to the subject, and the reality of presentation reinforces the quality of her fantasy. The book succeeds in creating a realm of fantasy and giving a new dimension to an actual world. One wonders if her close supervision of the progress of the illustrations before she died, may have<sup>made</sup> Frank Mahony devise his most portent graphic

images.

During the mid-nineteenth century, there was a massive influx of newly translated folk stories and fairy-tales such as the collections by Perrault, Grimm and Hans Andersen from all parts of the world. This folk literature found enthusiastic readers among adults as well as among the children for whom the published anthologies were ostensibly intended.

Two of the foremost illustrators of fairy stories in the 1890s were H.J. Ford and J.D. Batten. Ford is best remembered for his illustrations to Andrew Lang's eleven Coloured Fairy Books which were published between 1889 and 1910. He used a persuasive combination of realism and fantasy: his sensitive observations of the details of plant and animal life expressed in a straightforward graphic style, but within this naturalistic context, the fairies and monsters, princes and palaces became completely convincing.

J.D. Batten was even more versatile than Ford: he was known as a muralist, as an easel painter of genre and historical subjects. In common with Ford, he succeeded in transposing the sexual metaphors of the original folklore into his own imagery 'nicely demonstrated in the two artist images of hobgoblins with crossed legs and phallically protruding tongues'.<sup>5</sup> (figs 19, 20) Batten's subjects tended to be shown with more detachment and humour than Ford's, and

there was more emphasis on line in his drawing style. The graphic work of both belonged to a tradition that stretched back through Crane to Rossetti, and provided further instances of "boundary riders" among the classic English illustrators.

These books were read and enjoyed by Australian children like their English counterparts. They influenced Australian writers and illustrators to try to imitate their style. The chief proponent of this genre in Australia was Ida Rentoul Outhwaite.

In 1903 when she was only fifteen, Ida Rentoul's illustrations were being published in the New Idea, and a set of six Christmas cards in which she illustrated some children's verses written by her father, were published by that magazine. Kate Greenaway's illustrations first appeared in Christmas card designs, and it was her style which strongly influenced Ida's illustrations.

Throughout her life Ida Rentoul's conception of fairies and elves did not change from her earliest drawings found in such books as Mollie's Bunyip (1904) and Mollie's Staircase (1906). Her setting is not far removed from the fairyland of Oberon and Titania, her characters are delicate, fragile and feminine, even the Australia bunyip is stripped of his traditional horror. She drew on a powerful imagination for her romantic subjects, and on an inherent

decorative sense which enabled her to arrange the objects she drew in an harmonious and pleasing manner.

Ida Rentoul illustrated books written by Tarella Quin namely: Gum-Tree Brownie (1907) and Before the Lamps are Lit (1911). Both books were attractive for children. In Gum-Tree Brownie the drawings were even more assured. The subject matter was still that of fairies, elves and children: these were the inhabitants of her imaginative world, and although other creatures would be added the original conception remained and was recognisable in most of her work. Although this was a world of the imagination, there were some Australian motifs such as "spider orchids" or "blowfly grass" which she has seized on for their decorative qualities. Before the Lamps are Lit was similar in format and showed her work as assured and imaginative. Each drawing was not only an imaginative illustration, but also a balanced composition with its own positive style and finish. The whole book was an attractive production and contained some of her best black and white drawings.

In 1908, George Robinson published her fantasy The Lady of the Blue Beads. This was a distinctly Australian fairy story. The thirteen full-page black and white illustrations varied in scenes showing children on their island, surrounded by mermaids, fairies and elves. Enid Moodie Heddle remembers this book and others:

Children who were given these satisfyingly

heavy-bounded volumes surely got something worthwhile from them as they followed the adventures of the lady of the Blue Beads on her first Blue Moon on Sun Island... It was satisfying to be moved, even to tears, over the captive gum-tree brownie sitting dolefully on the top of the woodcutter's pannikin instead of in his appropriate gum tree... The Australianess of these stories and illustrations came years before Norman Lindsay's The Magic Pudding.<sup>6</sup>

The "Australianess" referred to by Heddle is a "coy-one", responding to the view of childhood held at the time by Australian writers and illustrators.

The first edition of Elves and Fairies was printed in 1917. There were thirty black and white, and fifteen full-page colour plates, some of which were mounted on pages of textured dark paper to show off the colours, and protected by tissue paper. These illustrations of Ida Rentoul Outhwaite's fairyland - her first to appear in colour - had popular appeal. They depicted her imaginary world in which there were echoes of Kate Greenaway, Arthur Rackham, and distinct art nouveau influence. Ida Rentoul Outhwaite shows a "love of symbolic and typical form"<sup>7</sup> in her interpretation of the poetic qualities of a plant - her plants take on a fairy quality, and the fairies and elves have something of the look of the plants with which they are associated. There is sometimes a tendency to over emphasise this point - a mannerism which probably belongs to the period and to the influence of art nouveau.

Walter Crane in his evaluation of the effectiveness of such an artist commented:

There is a receptive impressionable quality of mind, whether in young or old, which we call child-like. A fresh direct vision, a quickly stimulated imagination, a love of symbolic and typical form, with a touch of poetic suggestion, a delight in frank gay colour, and a sensitiveness to the variation of line, and contrasts of form - these are some of the characteristics of the child, whether grown up or not. Happy are they who remain children in these respects through life.

Ida Rentoul Outhwaite enriched Australian culture through her illustrations for children's books. The quality of her work and the respect with which it was treated are impressive, and it was most often reproduced with care in fine books. She was fundamentally a decorator rather than a true illustrator, and she worked best in collaboration with her sister, Annie or with Tarella Quin. Her other books often contained illustration supported by a weak text. In some respects her work resembles that of Kate Greenaway, being pretty, repetitive, and depicting a purely imaginary world (fig 21), not the Secondary World of Earthsea and Middle-Earth.

Both Kate Greenaway and Ida Rentoul Outhwaite were highly praised for their contributions to children's books but later were criticised for technical weaknesses and superficiality. Kate Greenaway's child (fig 22) was described as "languidly aesthetic" and "completely lacking in facial variety",<sup>9</sup> and Outhwaite's theme was beauty, a



girlish graceful world of dreams in which nothing unharmonious, awkward, or threatening was allowed to exist, avoiding the "Perilous realm".

The bush continued to figure largely in Australian fantasy in the first decade of the twentieth century. The focus of author's and illustrator's interest, however, seems to have broadened to native flora which had hardly attracted the attention of the authors and illustrators previously.

The fashion for European fairies in the Australian setting was notable not only in children's books but also in paintings and poetry. Sydney Long, one of the prominent painters of this period, also attempted to capture the spirit of the land in his paintings. Nevertheless, the imagination of these writers, poets and artists was confined within the European tradition. Bernard Smith writes that Long's attempt,

to populate the bush with classical gods was followed by other painters, but had a much wider vogue among poets... But the bush could not be easily submitted to classicizing. In 1905 Long, in a moment of self-criticism, admitted that artists in Australia would never be able, unlike those of other countries, to people their country with nymphs, naiads, pans and centaurs. Instead, he suggested, the Australian artist "will bid the aborigine blossom out in all his manly vigour, when sufficient time has allowed us to forget his failings".<sup>10</sup>

It was May Gibbs, a Western Australian painter, who attempted and succeeded in what Long had suggested for Australian artists. She created original personified plants in Gumnut Babies (1916) which was followed by Boronia Babies (1917), Flannel Flowers and other Bush Babies (1917) Wattle Babies (1918) and Snugglepot and Cuddlepie; their Adventures Wonderful (1918 - the first of the series), Little Ragged Blossom and more about Snugglepot and Cuddlepie (1920) and Little Obelia and further Adventures of Ragged Blossom, Snugglepot and Cuddlepie (1921).

In these books May Gibbs did not rely on European fairies to people the Australian bush as the other writers and illustrators had done. Her keen eyes as an artist, succeeded in capturing and anthropomorphising characteristics of weird looking banksias, fluffy wattle blossoms and the small round figures of gum nuts. Her creation of the Banksia men and the gum nut babies in Snugglepot and Cuddlepie in a visual form aptly embodies the essence of the Australian bush (fig 23).

Snugglepot and Cuddlepie; their Adventures Wonderful is a story of two gumnut babies who leave home to see a human, and to encounter various bush fauna and flora. On one level the book presents a universal motif. The motif of children who are driven by a strong curiosity to danger and to learn about life, resembles that of an archetype of fairy tales. During their adventures they encounter various

aspects of human nature; courage, cowardice and fear as well as joy. Each character in the book represents these aspects; daring Snugglepot, timid Cuddleprie, brave Mr. Frog, coward Lanky Leg and the wicked Banksia men.

May Gibbs reveals in her prose that she has a delightful ear for language. The very first thing which arouses the reader's imagination is the names of the protagonists, "Snugglepot and Cuddleprie". As Eleanor Cameron points out, "the rightness of the names" is very important for fantasy writers and "the names that fantasists choose are a matter of joy".<sup>11</sup>

The success of the first book must have encouraged her to publish the other books of the two gumnut babies' adventures. She obviously tried to follow the same pattern; an escape from and fight against evil embodied in the Banksia men. However, the books lack the impact of the first book, she relied too much on the illustrations as decorations instead of strengthening the narrative itself. In the sequel the story of Snugglepot and Cuddleprie turns away from an original Australian fantasy based on realism in presentation and becomes a pseudo fairy-tale.

Despite these criticisms of the sequel, the achievement of May Gibbs lies in her creation of the gumnut babies and the Banksia men. She succeeds in personifying the characteristics of the plants, especially in the case of

the banksia, and she succeeds in evoking a memorable "terror" in the child's mind. Snugglepote and Cuddlepote is an epoch-making achievement in the development of Australian fantasy. Eve Pownall, a writer and critic for children, writes;

Her work owes little or nothing to overseas inspiration,... May Gibbs has had a great effect on the development of fantasy in the Australian manner. ... I believe that later critics will find in May Gibbs one of the moulding forces in the development of the national character in our writing for children.<sup>12</sup>

I would disagree with Eve Pownall's statement that May Gibbs "owes little or nothing to overseas inspiration" because although her characters take local form, she employs universal fairy-tale codes in her material.

Another book which shares the same awakening to a national culture is Norman Lindsay's The Magic Pudding; Being the Adventures of Bunyip Bluegum and his friends Bill Barnacle and Sam Sawnoff (1918) which was published in the same year as the first book of Snugglepote and Cuddlepote. The Magic Pudding is also a story about continuous fighting among vigorous bush characters. Unlike May Gibbs, who presents a clear cut picture of "goodies" and "baddies", Lindsay delineates characters comparable to Stevenson's "Long John Silver" who innocently pursue their own interests. The vitality and vigour which the two artists Gibbs and Lindsay, persistently depict in their books may reflect the atmosphere of the time, World War 1.

Long before Norman Lindsay wrote the book, however, he had an idea that children preferred food to fairies. He once had an argument with Bert Stevens, a staff member of the Bulletin, "over the literary pabulum agreeable to the infant mentality". He writes;

He plumped for fairies and I for food. I said that I was willing to bet that if he wrote a book about fairies, and I one about food, mine would beat his as a popular product.<sup>13</sup>

In Creative Effort (1924), his major theoretical work which was written about the same time as the publication of The Magic Pudding, he writes;

. . . the great mass of humanity is concerned with only three problems: filling its belly, clothing its body, exercising its senses. . . . But for us, who seek a definite imagery in self-projection, this muddle of Earth affairs can never be of other significance than the material of Art, for Art alone can extract that formative imagery from it which can become a formative substance of mind.<sup>14</sup>

The book The Magic Pudding is a collection of interesting characters and episodes pivoting around them and the pudding "a very secret, crafty puddin', an' if you wasn't up to his game he'd be askin' you to look at a spider an' then run away while your back is turned".<sup>15</sup> Lindsay's animals are fully humanised (fig 24) to illustrate various types of Australians such as a swagman (parrot) and a low larrikin (kookaburra) for example. On the other hand human characters in the book reflect stereotypes of various social groups; a muddle headed policeman, a pompous mayor or a rude

usher. Lindsay is not interested in creating integrated characters but he is preoccupied with presenting comical sketches of Australians through his depiction of their characteristic posture, gestures and verbal idiom.

In this respect the book is linguistically one of the first in the genre of fantasy to introduce a specifically Australian flavour by adopting Australian slang in the dialogue. Lindsay presents a social landscape in terms of its language and characters, although he is not interested in depicting a natural landscape like Le Guin's "Earthsea". J.R. Townsend, a distinguished English writer and critic of children's books, describes the book as "a solid strongly flavoured fantasy whose recipe is (it seems to me) uniquely Australian."<sup>16</sup>

In Australian fantasy, there have been only three significant books which concentrate on humour: The Magic Pudding, Midnite: The Story of the Wild Colonial Boy (1967) and Bottersnikes and Gumbles (1967). The Magic Pudding and Bottersnikes and Gumbles are classified in the same group of humorous fantasy. As T. Inglis Moore points out, The Magic Pudding is "an outstanding illustration of non-satirical wit".<sup>17</sup> Margery Fisher, another distinguished English critic of children's books, aptly writes that Lindsay's book is "one simple expanded joke".<sup>18</sup> Also in this regard, Saxby states "Fantasy speaks to the heightened sensibility to produce wonder and delight. A by-product is humour."<sup>19</sup>

Another author/illustrator of this period, still well-known to children today is Dorothy Wall, whose Blinky Bill, the koala bear is as Australian as Snugglepot and Cuddlepie, and just as popular with children. Like Beatrix Potter's Peter Rabbit or Squirrel Nutkin, Blinky Bill is humanised, but retains his animal characteristics. Because he possesses the traits of so many children the world over: curiosity, a desire for independence, a love of food, and a great propensity for mischief, he provides a means of identification for children who through his adventures can live out their own dreams and hidden desires.

For a child, all the doors of his imaginative vision open outwards; the content of the story is the marvellous world beyond these doors, the styles is what opens them for boys and girls too small to reach the knobs.<sup>20</sup>

Dorothy Wall was first known as an illustrator rather than a writer, and her art work for The Crystal Bowl (1921) by J.J. Hall, both black and white, and colour belongs to the same school as Ida Rentoul Outhwaite and May Gibbs. Each of these artists created her own particular fairy characters, and interpreted the Australian bush in her own way, but there is a basic similarity in the artistic techniques employed - possibly because of a common influence from the art nouveau style. In Bridget and the Bees (1934) she dresses her bees with human trappings - hats, crowns, and boots and her drawings are meticulous.

When in 1933 Angus and Robertson published Blinky Bill, the Quaint Little Australian, Dorothy Wall had established herself, not only as an illustrator, but also as a writer for children. The following year saw the publication of Blinky Bill Grows Up, Brownie, the Story of a Naughty Little Rabbit (1935) and in 1937, Blinky Bill and Nutsy, Two Little Australians.

Dorothy Wall worked in the tradition of Beatrix Potter except that she used Australian animals, although the characters are named and depicted as bush characters, they are dressed and behave in a wholly realistic manner (fig 25). To Dorothy Wall, unlike May Gibbs, the setting means little. The gum-trees the koalas inhabit, are hardly recognisable as gum-trees, and no other vegetation or feature, even suggests a bush setting. Dorothy Wall created a distinct, detailed and coherent Secondary World and the inhabitants recognised as Australian animals awaken an interest in the child reader because he or she can identify with the characters and the situations that arise.

Unfortunately Dorothy Wall's style has not the literary quality of Beatrix Potter, it is too verbose. Her illustrations, too, lack the delicacy of Beatrix Potter's. Despite this, the books continued popularity over such a long period clearly shows how children have enjoyed it. The revived sense of national pride as our country approaches its bicentennial celebrations, in the illustrated "native"



characters like Blinky Bill, Bunyip Bluegum, Snugglepote and Cuddlepate and the Magic Pudding, has caused publishing houses to reprint many of these books to be appreciated by children of today.

These Australian writers and illustrators of the pre-World War II period had relied heavily on European influences and styles, until such illustrators as Gibbs, Lindsay and Wall used recognisably Australian fauna to explore the range of human characters and relationships. They attempted to create a truly indigenous world and the native characters they created provided an enhanced vision of primary world reality.



Fig. 16. Souter's strong black and white decorations in Gum Leaves, Turner, (1900)



Fig. 17. Lambert's illustration for the story title, Spirit of the Bushfire, Whitfield (1898)

Fig. 18. F. Mahony's illustration of Dot with the Kangaroo, Dot and the Kangaroo, Pedley (1899)

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Fig. 19. H. Ford's hobgoblin from "The Snow-Queen", The Pink Fairy Book, Lang (1901)



Fig. 21. I: Outhwaite's fairy character from Before the Lamps are Lit, Quin, (1911).



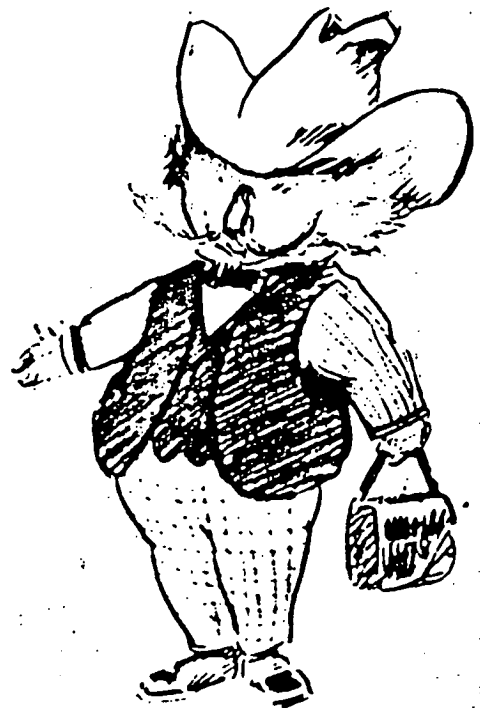
Fig. 22. "Little Bo Peep" from Mother Goose or the Old Nursery Rhymes, Greenaway, (n.d.).

Fig. 23. The big, bad Banksia Man in Complete Adventures of Snugglepoot and Cuddlepief, Gibbs (1948)

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Fig. 24. Humanised Bunyip Bluegum, The Magic Pudding, Lindsay (1918)



"You'll be rabbit pie in two twos,  
said the old owl.

Fig. 25. D. Wall's portrayal of Blinky Bill, Blinky Bill Grows Up, Wall. (1934)

# NOTES

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## CHAPTER SEVEN

FRANK D. DAVISON & PIXIE O'HARRIS,

MARY & ELIZABETH DURACK --

ABORIGINAL DREAM-TIME

In children's literature, the mid-thirties and early forties saw the emergence of two significant fantasies: Frank Darby Davison's Children of the Dark People (1936) illustrated by Pixie O'Harris, and Mary Durack's The Way of the Whirlwind (1941) illustrated by Elizabeth Durack. Both these books will be studied in this chapter examining the work of both author and illustrator in dealing with Aboriginal children and the spirit of the land. They had direct association with the bush and the aborigines. They treated their subjects with an insight, understanding and genuine sympathy which were seldom found in the past in Australian children's literature.

Since A Mother's Offering to Her Children (1841) most writers and illustrators of the last century had been contemptuous of the Aborigines. Early illustrators had pre-conceived notions of their appearance and characteristics. They were drawn to look like Africans or Red Indians in for example Peter Parley's Annual 1855 (fig. 26). In the genre of fantasy, F. Atha Westbury treated Aborigines as fierce cannibals in Australian Fairy Tales which was first published as late as 1897. In Dot and the



Kangaroo however, Ethel Pedley wrote from the viewpoint of the bush creatures who see the Aborigines as superior to the whites in terms of conservation of nature.

Mrs. Aeneas Gunn was one of the minority who wrote books about Aborigines and their culture with understanding and sympathy. It is obvious that she tried to create or find mutual understanding between them and herself. Yet, she could not help imposing something of her own cultural preoccupations on the Aborigines and consequently often found herself disappointed and amazed by them.

One of the first attempts to present Aboriginal culture in a respectful way was Mary Fitzgerald's King Bungaree's Pyalla and Stories, Illustrative of Manners and Customs that Prevailed Among Australian Aborigines (1891). However, the first really successful and longest surviving work of this kind is K. L. Parker's Australian Legendary Tales (1896) which is a collection from nine different tribes. It is still a major work, and was a turning point because it gave timely recognition and acceptance to the notion that Aborigines had a genuine culture of their own. This was the first Australian children's book to have illustrations by an Aboriginal artist, Tommy McCrae. This book was accepted as a children's book and in 1954, the year after it had been reissued in a slightly modified form edited by H. Drake-Brockman with illustrations by Elizabeth

Durack, it won the award of the Children's Book Council of New South Wales, for the best Australian Children's Book of the Year. Neither the pseudo-Aboriginal art printed in umber in the full-page illustrations, nor the European-style caricature-like line drawings set in the text have retained their appeal, though the book was very popular and went into many editions. Numerous collections of illustrated Aboriginal myths will be cited more appropriately in Chapter eight.

Frank Darby Davison's Children of the Dark People was one of the first books to present Aborigines as a people in their own right, with no spirit of condescension, drawing naturally on Aboriginal customs and beliefs rather than superimposing European form and values on them.

Children of the Dark People is a story of two Aboriginal children, Jackadgery and Nimmitybel, who become lost owing to a witch-doctor's magic and who travel through various parts of the continent in search of their way home.<sup>1</sup> During this search, they encounter some spirits of the land and animals who protect them from the witch-doctor's pursuit. Their journey in the continent is at the same time the search for Old Mr. Bunyip, the Guardian Spirit of the Bush, whom they eventually meet and who shows them the way home.

The book provides three levels of reading through sketches by Pixie O'Harris and words by Davison. Firstly it is a book which describes the Australian landscape; secondly, Aboriginal life, culture, custom and world-views; and thirdly, it is a fantasy with a fairy tale quality.

Davison states his attempt to write fantasy in the acknowledgement to the first edition:

WHAT I stand or fall by -- I think -- in this simple tale of two aboriginal children who became lost and found their way home again, is an attempt to possess four worlds within one pair of covers, Reality and Fantasy, and Past linked with the Present.<sup>2</sup>

To link with the past and the present, he aptly chose "a story of the olden time" of Aborigines. In fact he clearly states in the prologue that the people in his story belong to the past.

THIS story of two children of the dark people who once roamed the Australian bush, who were so few and who have now almost passed away, is not about any special part of the bush; it might have happened in any place where grass still grows and gum-trees stand. And, although the dark people have mostly gone, the Spirits of the Bush are still with us.<sup>3</sup>

Davison felt the concern that many artists had at that time in Australia's history, that "the dark people have mostly gone" and before this happened, it was vital that the Aboriginal characteristics and culture be recorded both visually and in print. The past Davison and O'Harris tried to link with the present is the past of the Aborigines. And the land represents continuation of time. Although it deals with the same subject, Davison's book makes a significant

contrast to Mary Durack's book, for Durack sees the Aborigines as people living happily in the present.

Children of the Dark People has the quality of a fairy tale. The children disobey their elders by submitting themselves to the witch-doctor's enticements and are trapped by his mischievous tricks. "A strange figure such as they had never seen before"<sup>4</sup> is portrayed by Pixie O'Harris's black and white sketch of the witch-doctor with head plumage and body paint in a threatening pose. The children are helped by the spirits of nature and bush animals to overcome danger. In the process of this trial they prove their ability to survive in the wilderness. Their search for the way home coincides with the search for Old Mr. Bunyip, the Guardian Spirit, who is a personification of natural law and order. This implies that learning the law and order of nature leads the children to find safety. Significantly Old Mr. Bunyip bears a strong resemblance to the stereotyped elders of the tribe. The sketch by Pixie O'Harris (fig 27) show what is aptly described by these words:

The being at whom she had pointed was tall and stately, and was marching along with the aid of a sapling staff. His skin was of the colour of their own people. He had thick white hair and a beard that was like white cloud lying on his chest. He reminded them of some of the elders of the tribe, except that he was much bigger and more important to look at.<sup>5</sup>

The archetype of the wise old person is not confined to Australian Aboriginal culture, of course. He frequently appears in fairy tales, "when the hero is in a hopeless and

desperate situation from which only profound reflection or a lucky idea . . . . can extricate him".<sup>6</sup>

On the other hand, the witch-doctor can be identified as a trickster who plays mischievous tricks. He is not described as the Evil one who overpowers the protagonists and challenges God. Davison and O'Harris treat this character with a warm and sympathetic touch, as a fallible being. The motive for his tricks on the children is jealousy. As the story proceeds, the narrative supported by the illustrations delineates his childish and humorous nature, his anxiety and fear. He can be interpreted as a man who thoughtlessly disturbs the natural order for the sake of his personal interest and desire.

As a story-maker of fantasy, Davison did not succeed in creating a consistent Secondary World. His failure to convince readers lies in the appearance of the spirits. The spirits who are incarnated in human female form, are not consistent with the land of the Dream Time because of their strong resemblance to the European fairies. Pixie O'Harris' illustrations reinforce these images. She creates Spirits more akin to religious icons or European fairies enclosed in a frame (fig 28). I feel that there is not a mesh between the Dreamtime creatures the Aborigines see and these depicted by Pixie O'Harris and Frank Darby Davison. Illustrators such as Dick Roughsey studied later in this dissertation show Aboriginal mythology from the

inside rather than as seen in this story from the outside looking in. Pixie O'Harris had difficulty stepping into the Aboriginal culture. Her Spirits such as the Spirit Billabong is "clad in a filmy garment decorated with water-lily buds"<sup>7</sup>, the dress of the Spirit of the Caves is "hung with crystals",<sup>8</sup> The Spirit of the Plains:

wore a thin billowy gown of grey-blue, as soft as it were made of the softest feathers of birds and over her hair was loose crimson hood of the same shade as the band over the heads of the native companions.<sup>9</sup>

and the Spirit of the Mountain Gullies "has green slippers and a dress of maidenhair".<sup>10</sup>

Both Davison's and O'Harris's description and illustration of the Spirit of the Billabong successfully conveys the feeling of "another world" but not necessarily from the Aboriginal Dreamtime. This description of the dawn at the billabong is where the children see the spirit disappearing into the waters.

The Spirit of the Billabong was now at the water's edge, and growing faint to the eyes of the children. A sweet, long, trilling call of a bird came from the shadows of a tree near by.

"That was the Singer of the Dawn," said the Spirit.

"Goodbye, children, and be brave!" While she was speaking a bright star fluttered down from the sky and burned above her head. She glided away, stepping from leaf to leaf across the water lilies. Then the star went.<sup>11</sup>

In spite of the technical defects of introducing brumbies into the Dreamtime Australia; creating Spirits in the form of European fairies, and the magic of Donna Buang, the snow mountain in summoning up a blizzard out of season,<sup>12</sup> the contribution of this book to the development of children's illustrated literature in Australia should not be underestimated. The greatest of Davison's and O'Harris' achievements as fantasists are that they personified spirits of the bush and natural species and phenomena to fulfil one of the human desires to come to terms with nature. By embodying spirits of the land, they tried to link the present with the past as well as attempting to fuse Reality and Fantasy. Davison and O'Harris were certainly aware of an aspect of mythic in Aboriginal culture, although their portrayal of it was far removed from the Dreamtime of the Aborigines. Unfortunately for Pixie O'Harris, she began to draw European fairies at the time they were becoming outmoded in Australia and her illustrations of the Spirits in Davison's book look like an attempt to keep these in vogue rather than portray the Spirits of the Aboriginal Dreamtime. Since the 1930's fairies and magic have inspired few works of interest in Australia until Amanda Walsh's Egrin and the Painted Wizard (1972) and Egrin and the Wicked Witch (1978) and neither of these are concerned with Aboriginal life and culture.

It was however, Mary and Elizabeth Durack who developed the concept of fantasy and timelessness to a full extent and succeeded in fusing the past and the present, realism and fantasy in The Way of the Whirlwind. Using the Dreamtime of the Aborigines to provide the fantasy world, the author and illustrator create a literary folk-tale in the Aboriginal tradition.

It was a wild bush country full of the strangest of bush creatures where dreams and the everyday things were so mixed up that nobody bothered to find out which was which. Nungaree and Jungaree told us that the things they dreamed about were more real than anything else, because in their dreams they met the bush creatures as they really were and understood the things they said and could speak to them in their own language.<sup>13</sup>

The Way of the Whirlwind is a story of two Aboriginal children Nungaree and Jungaree, who in the dreamtime went playing with their baby brother, Woogoo. Having played hard and eaten well, the children slept. While they sleep, Woogoo vanishes. The search of the two older children for their baby brother provides the motif and action of the book. The episode of their baby brother being taken by the whirlwind to the sky and living happily there seems to be derived from a legend in the Kimberlies.<sup>14</sup> The significance of the book as compared to Davison's Children of the Dark People is that Mary and Elizabeth Durack reproduced the world of the Aboriginal childhood of the Eastern Kimberly region which they knew well "through the eyes of the Aborigines".<sup>15</sup> Their world was an "actual"



world unlike Davison's and O'Harris'. They introduced the endemic flora and fauna, and the natural phenomena of the region which the Aboriginal children encountered everyday. They are so well merged in the story that we can hardly distinguish the myth part from the fictitious part of the story. The Duracks rode the boundaries between the actual and imaginary in their book The Way of the Whirlwind.

The name of the protagonists, Nungaree and Jungaree, are one of the most familiar terms for Aboriginal children in the region. "Nangari" is the equivalent of "mother" and one of the first terms a child learns, whereas "djangari" is the mother's brother.<sup>16</sup> The two children travel through the wild country by themselves, they are sometimes helped in their search by birds and animals and the forces of nature. These are representative of human types, the crocodile for example, who appears frightening, but is really prepared to help. It is he who takes the children to Old Father Bremurer, the Rainbow Serpent, who lives underwater in a "dingy river cave". Elizabeth shows this with bold dark colours (fig 29) giving depth to the illustration and the impression of being underwater. The children standing in a pose discussing their search for home, show their apprehension in their stance. Inserted here is the Aboriginal view of conception:

. . . everyone knew that old man Bremurer was the spirit father of all the children of the dream country. He looked after every spirit baby down in the depths of the river until its man-father would be swimming or waiting

patiently to spear a fish when he discovered it, then Bremurer would tell the spirit baby that he must leave his river home and come up to the great earth.<sup>17</sup>

Being told by Bremurer to find the place where the Whirlwind goes to sleep, the two children start their search. So, like the lad in the Norse myth, who went to the North Wind, the children set off to find the Whirlwind. In the process of their search, they encounter various bush creatures including a fearsome old man called Bubba Piebi who grudgingly lends Jungaree a talisman in the form of a firefly. Mary and Elizabeth Durack do not show a coy-view of children but simply show a beautiful world of childhood in which the children experience joy and wonder of nature and fear of darkness. Eventually the courage and perseverance of the children is rewarded, and Bremurer helps them to reach the end of Somewhere and to find Woogoo. In the course of their search, the children have not only used their wits, but they have gained wisdom in the process.

The universal quality of the book also lies in the children's search for the end of Somewhere which leads to Nowhere. This seems to represent the search of all mankind. In the book, Somewhere represents the earth and Nowhere represents the Universe. The children mounted upon the rainbow higher and higher until they see:

Somewhere, curving beneath them like a coloured bowl, and Nowhere stretching out beyond and beyond and beyond, oceans of nothingness and soft billowing clouds.<sup>18</sup>

This is a poetical description of the mystery of the universe. When the children look down to earth, they are no longer children of the Dreamtime, but children of anywhere and anytime. For they see:

all the seas and the rivers and the great, wild spaces of the dream country, and the clustered buildings and blue smokes of great cities, and little patchwork<sup>19</sup> green fields of far distant countries . . .

From the old folk stories, the Duracks have taken the swift, forward-moving action, so that the tale never flags. Even though the adult reader is sure that the search will be successful, the suspense is maintained throughout each stage of the journey. Then Woogoo is found, the story comes to a swift and satisfying conclusion:

And that is how Nungaree and Jungaree came to love Here-and-There the Whirlwind, and Bremurer and rainbow serpent and the crocodile, and old Mother Mopoke whose eggs they had stolen so often, and the red kangaroos, and even little Bubba Piebi and old frilly lizard and so many other bush folk who helped them in their search, but most of all they loved Here-and-There and his mischievous elfin ways and welcomed him when they heard him coming, laughing and singing<sup>20</sup> and hissing through the long yellow grasses.

Although the Duracks successfully created a fantasy world using the Aboriginal Dreamtime there was still a small measure of European influence depicted by "his mischievous elfin ways."

The Way of the Whirlwind is one of the most lavishly illustrated books ever to be produced in Australia. It is a large book -- 37 by 23.5 centimetres, perhaps awkwardly large for some children to handle, but this has permitted the coloured plates by Elizabeth Durack to be surrounded by ample white space.

Elizabeth Durack was strongly influenced by Albert Namatjira's style, using the arresting strong colour contrasts and the simple outlines of much of the landscapes of the Arunta artists. Others of her illustrations followed more traditional European styles, still using the strong colour, with flocks of emerald parrots or swirls of sparks against a black night sky (fig 30). There were nine colour plates and three black and white, as well as black and white line drawings in the text. The framed coloured plates belong to the dreamtime, just as the black and white line drawings which decorated the text belong to the more realistic level of playing, walking, swimming and eating on which the story moves. Elizabeth Durack supports and supplements the text through both these techniques used. Her black and white illustrations perhaps portray more of the emotions experienced by these lost children such as fear, excitement, enjoyment and struggle against the unknown.

Elizabeth, not quite escaping Gombrich's "illusions", found it hard to resist drawing the aboriginal children in a manner which was close to caricature and sentimentality. She had cleverly captured the postures of aboriginals of all ages whom she observed on the stations, but by exaggeration she slightly vulgarised her drawings. The children's features in the black and white sketches (fig 31) showed very pronounced facial characteristics such as protruding lips and blond hair; characteristics that were exaggerated by the artist.

The cover illustration of the spiralling ~~whirlwind~~ whirlwind depicted in red on the shiny black paper-covered boards was impressive particularly as the book was so large. The decorated endpapers inspired by Aboriginal art were crude and unsuccessful. The book had gone into four editions by the end of the war when it was taken over by Angus and Robertson, who reprinted it many times in a smaller edition. In 1979 a revised edition with all twelve plates in colour was published. The Way of the Whirlwind was unique for despite its popularity, and although numerous other books based on Aboriginal stories have been published, it does not seem to have inspired other children's books.

This is one of the most beautiful and successful fantasies ever created in Australia. The illustrations of the book by Elizabeth Durack reinforces through rhythm and colour, the nature and universe of the aboriginal Dreamtime

which the narrative successfully conveys. This dynamic use of colour and line gives the atmosphere of fundamental life of the land. Mary and Elizabeth Durack succeed in possessing "Reality and Fantasy, the Present and the Past".<sup>21</sup> This book has an everlasting and universal quality as well as unique indigenous colour.

Fig. 26. Anonymous English artist's portrayal of Aborigines, Peter Parley's Annual 1855.

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Fig. 27. P. O'Harris' portrayal of Old Mr. Bunyip, Children of the Dark People, Davidson (1936)



His hand gripped a sapling staff.



The Spirit of the Billabong.

Fig. 28. P. O'Harris' "The Spirit of the Billabong", Children of the Dark People, Davidson (1936).

Fig. 29. E. Durack's illustration of the Rainbow Serpent in the dingy river cave, The Way of the Whirlwind, Durack (1941)





Fig. 30. E. Durack's illustration, "A flock of emerald parrots", The Way of the Whirlwind, Durack, (1941)

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*"A flock of emerald parrots darted out of the grass as they went along."*

Fig. 31. E. Durack's portrayal of the Aboriginal children, The Way of the Whirlwind, Durack, (1941).



NOTES

1. Davison revised and enlarged the first edition. This study is, therefore, based on the revised edition.
2. Davison, Frank D. Children of the Dark People, 5th. edn., rev., Sydney : Angus & Robertson, 1959.
3. Ibid., Prologue.
4. Ibid., p. 40.
5. Ibid., p. 24.
6. Jung, C.G. Four Archetypes, tr. R.F.C. Hill, London : Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1972, pp. 95 -96.
7. Children of the Dark People, p. 59.
8. Ibid., p. 59.
9. Ibid., p. 138.
10. Ibid., p. 66.
11. Ibid., p. 33.
12. Ibid., p. 33.
13. Durack, Mary The Way of the Whirlwind, ill. Elizabeth Durack, rev. edn., Sydney : Angus & Robertson, 1980, p. 7.
14. Aboriginal Arts Board of the Australia Council, Visions of Mowanjurn, Adelaide : Rigby, 1980, pp. 48 - 50.
15. Smith, Graeme Kinross Australia's Writers, Melbourne : Thomas Nelson, 1980, p. 259.
16. Berndt, R.M. The World of the First Australians, Sydney : Ure Smith, 1964, p. 132.
17. Durack, op. cit., p. 13.
18. Ibid., p. 68.
19. Ibid., p. 68.
20. Ibid., last page.
21. Davison, op. cit., Acknowledgement in 1st. edition.

## CHAPTER EIGHT

### DICK ROUGHSEY - ABORIGINAL LEGENDS

In the 1890s there appeared two collections of Aboriginal myths and legends mentioned previously in Chapter Seven, those of Mary Fitzgerald, King Bungaree's Pyalla and Stories, Illustrative of Manners and Customs that Prevailed Among Australian Aborigines and Australian Legendary Tales by Mrs. Langloh Parker. These were the first attempts to present Aboriginal culture in a respectful and responsible way. K. L. Parker's Australian Legendary Tales was a turning point because it gave timely recognition and acceptance to the notion that Aborigines had a genuine culture of their own, which was to be taken seriously.

F. T. Macartney in his Australian Literary Essays claims that aboriginal life:

offers for literary treatment little more than the fairy-tale sort of interest of legends and human relationships at an elementary stage.<sup>1</sup>

Yet, it is just this fairy-tale element that has given Mrs. Parker's book an appeal to some children. As with myths and legends from any country, these stories comment on and illuminate basic human behaviour and the problems of human existence. Mrs. Parker has provided Australian children with the opportunity to read for themselves fantasy that was truly indigenous.

In the twentieth century Mary Grant Bruce published The Stone Axe of Burkamukk (1922), another collection of Aboriginal legends. In the foreword she makes a strong plea in a very patronising tone for the preservation of what is left of the folk literature of the Aborigines:

Year by year the old black tribes are dying out, and many of their legends and beliefs are dying with them. These legends deal with the world as the blacks knew it; the Bush animals and birds; the powers of storm, flood, fire, thunder, and magic, and the beings who they thought controlled these powers; with the sun, moon and stars; and with the life and death of men and women. . . . The folk tales of a people are the story of its soul, and it would be a pity if the native races of our country were to vanish altogether before we had collected enough of their legends to let their successors know what manner of people lived in Australia for thousands of years before the white man came . . .

Mary Grant Bruce tells the stories in modern English that has a literary flavour, and has made no attempt to retain in the telling voice, the rhythms or oral idiom of Aboriginal speech. The stories are so selected that they illustrate the kind of tale the aborigines handed down by word of mouth and contain information about their way of life. The illustrations by J. McFarlane depicted Aborigines more realistically than in previous illustrated works.

In more recent times researchers such as Roland Robinson (Legend and Dreaming, 1952; Wandjina, 1968) and Catherine Berndt (Land of the Rainbow Snake, 1979) have gone directly to the Aboriginal storytellers themselves.

Robinson says, "One Aborigine who watched me writing down a story as he told it to me could not understand why I could not carry the story in my head."<sup>3</sup>.

Since this time, there have been many authors and illustrators who have tried to integrate the cultural threads of European and Aboriginal Australians in their stories, those wishing to find fantasy figures more appropriate than gauzy-winged fairies for an Australian idiom, have turned to the properly-recorded folklore of the Aborigines. Patricia Wrightson created an original folklore in her Wirrum trilogy. Wrightson hoped that there would be a development of an Australian mythology from this "traditional literature" of the Aborigines, with special value to:

develop a creative use of Australian folklore in our fantasy, just as and no less authentically than<sup>4</sup> European writers used European folklore.

This development worries some Aboriginal people ignoring as it does the living reality of Aboriginal mythology. As Patricia Wrightson states as a guideline needed when contemporary fantasy has grown out of traditional folklore, authors, publishers, teachers, librarians and readers need to:

have a measure that we can apply to their work, something that shows where authenticity leaves off and interpretation or invention begins.<sup>5</sup>

The recent change which has seen our authors and illustrators prepared to accept Aborigines and their culture on equal ground, according them long overdue respect and dignity, is due to many things. A growing world-wide consciousness is surely one general factor, but much of today's writing owes its enlightened awareness to the precedent of Nan Chauncy's Tangara and Mathinna's People (1967). Writing in Reading Time in July, 1970 Patricia Wrightson says of Nan Chauncy's work:

The effort of stepping out of one's own racial personality into another as different as the Australian Aboriginal is a tremendous one to make even briefly.

It is important here to outline for the purpose of this study, the Aboriginal concept of how the world was formed, so that we may appreciate how it can be woven into children's book illustrations by such illustrators as Dick Roughsey.

All the world's people have a view of how the world was formed. Aborigines believe that, in the beginning the earth was featureless, flat and grey. There were no mountain ranges, no rivers, no billabongs, no birds or animals -- in fact not one living thing. Then long, long ago came the Dreamtime.

The clue to understanding lies in the Dreamtime. In the Dream world, man dreamed splendid dreams of kinship with everything that surrounded him and invented glorious tales, as well as horrific ones, to provide a satisfying account of the origin of natural

life with which he was so familiar, investing what most of us accept as common place with the supernatural.

The Dreamtime was a time when giant creatures rose up out of the grey plains where they had been slumbering for countless ages. These mythical Beings looked like animals or plants or insects, but they behaved just like humans. They wandered across the vast grey washes, digging for water and searching for food. As they searched, because of their giant-size, they made huge ravines and rivers in the land. Thus the world took on the shape it has today.

Aboriginal people believe that in the Dreamtime, the traditional Aboriginal way of life was established by these mythical Beings; this way of life is still followed in traditional Aboriginal society today. The Dreamtime ended, no one knows how or why, and time and life as we know it began. For Aboriginal people the land has a special meaning, for all over the land there are features which are reminders of those giant Beings of the Dreamtime. When Aboriginal people see a mountain or river, rock or tree, they think of mythical Beings that had a part in their own creation.

The Aborigines believe that they are directly descended from these mythical Beings. When the Dreamtime ended, the people were left with a social and culture.

heritage which came from their ancestors. The bonds with the mythical Beings of the Dreamtime are such that they believe in a united world of body and spirit for every form of being in the land, both living and non-living. This then means, that the rocks, rivers and waterholes are more than just a reminder or a symbol of the Dreamtime; they represent fundamental reality and eternal truth.

Scientists who have interested themselves in the aboriginal dreamtime, have discovered that:

although we may read such stories as if they were fairy-tales, they have a different meaning to the Aborigines. They are "creation" stories: myths and legends which explain why things happened as they did in the world of the aboriginal tribes . . .

Collectors and readers of these Aboriginal songs and legends, must try to live in their imagination the life and thoughts of a people whose literature is not written down, but carried round in their heads, kept in their memory by constant telling and acting.

This is one of the reasons why over the last fifty years, there has been an urgency to get these stories written down in an illustrated form. There is a concern among aborigines that this part of their culture will be lost in any assimilation in the Australian culture and literature. There has also been a recognised need to share this part of their culture on a universal basis.



The series of books published by Rigby, The Dreamtime (1965), The Dawn of Time (1965) and The First Sunrise (1971) text by Charles Mountford, paintings and line illustrations by Ainslie Roberts were an excellent example of outstanding collections of Aboriginal myths. These collections lead to an appreciation of the Aboriginal view of the creation of the land.

In this study to illustrate the way Ainslie Roberts' paintings add another dimension to the text of Charles Mountford whose style of writing made for understanding and storytelling, I will examine "The Numbakull and the First Aborigines" and "Mirram and Wareen the Hunters"<sup>9</sup> from The Dreamtime, the black and white line drawings set at the side of the text (fig 32) portray an aspect of the way of life of the Aborigines. Almost as though Ainslie Roberts wanted to place the text and the coloured frame in a realistic setting to give the myth a "time and place" in our culture. Roberts has attempted to depict a more coherent and developed Secondary World, a "cosmology" in the view of Umberto Eco earlier quoted in Chapter One. The coloured framed illustration (fig 33) on the right painted in strong ochre colours seems to tell the story in another dimension, it seems to make the myth "believable". I would agree with the statement in How Australian Literature Grew,

Aborigines . . . they have given to us a special sort of literature and added to our ideas of art.<sup>10</sup>

These three books of Charles Mountford and Ainslie Roberts, are probably appreciated by adults to a greater extent than children, especially the framed prints because children would have difficulty reading the codes of the artist's work. The artist has attempted in the coloured frame to depict the myth visually, to use the depiction as a narrative medium, and not merely as decoration.

Since this series, there have been a large number of Aboriginal collections of myths and legends drawn from various tribes throughout Australia. For this study of children's illustrators, I have chosen to focus particularly on the work of Dick Roughsey in children's picture books, but not to the exclusion of those others who have contributed to the oral and visual tradition such as Tulo Gordon, Jackson Cotton, Gulpilil, Eddie Bennell and Anne Thomas. The books I will reference by these illustrators and writers, have more success when shared by an adult or by an older reader because the younger child-reader has difficulty in reading the codes. The illustrations particularly of Milbi (fig 34) Aboriginal Tales from Queensland's Endeavour River by Tulo Gordon are more in the style of the traditional bark or cave paintings done in the ochre colours. Tulo Gordon shares through his stories and illustrations an explanation of many of the traditional cave paintings found, a sharing with the reader part of the

Aboriginal Dreamtime.

Touch the Morning: Tasmanian Native Legends

(1979) are told and illustrated by Jackson Cotton. He has selected the Tasmanian flora and fauna as the theme for this book. Each page initially introduces the focus, for example, "Fire-tail Finch -- Lieka, the Fiery One"<sup>11</sup> commences with a black and white sketch of the bird. This is followed by the text underneath explaining the legend, on the opposite page, illustrations show the description of the legend, thus, meaning can be gained through both media. Jackson Cotton has attempted to show through his illustrations the characteristics of the Tasmanian aborigines (fig 35) which make them distinct from mainland tribes. He also attempts to give us an understanding of the Dreamtime of the Tasmanian aborigine, who was not, of course, of the same stock as mainland aborigines.

Through the retelling in Stories of the Dreamtime (1979) and The Birirrk (1983) Gulpilil passes on the wisdom of the Dreaming to the Aboriginal children. In Stories of the Dreamtime Gulpilil has evolved a highly distinctive style characterised by heavily textured backgrounds laid on with a knife or a roller instead of a brush. Gulpilil's work conveys a sense of the individual's assertion of himself in the hostile world of the Aboriginal myths. His illustrations reflect the dialogue between the subject and the abstract structure. The subject is never merely a tree

or a figure, it can be a form, a shape or a colour, for although Gulpilil sometimes begins depicting realistic objects, he does not complete them. His technique gives his illustrations a fantasy element through the blurring of images within frames. His illustrations are a build-up of frames showing movement and action by the characters. For example, in the story "Old Yirbaik-Bail and Her Dingoes",<sup>12</sup> a series of frames (figs 36, 37, 38) add another dimension to the text and through the technique used, he tries to diffuse the possible fear induced by the telling of what could be for children frightening tales. He has chosen bold sketches in black and white to convey the powerful emotions that he sought to capture -- those of his Aboriginal traditional past.

In Aboriginal Legends from Bibulman Tribe (1981)

Eddie Bennell and Anne Thomas, members of the Bibulman tribe, express the concern for losing these stories of creation and through this book have attempted to preserve the unique and almost forgotten history and mythology of the Bibulman tribe. In the foreword, the beliefs of this tribe are explained:

Their entire existence was based on a total acceptance of the will and wisdom of the Korrndon Marma Man, who is the creator of all things: the inanimate world, of all plant and animal life and human beings. His will was communicated to our people through the chosen Mubarrn men of the tribes, who were powerful healers.<sup>13</sup>

I have chosen one story from this collection to discuss here, "Bilbarr, Waitch, and Koomurra"<sup>14</sup>. Within this story, the aspects of the corroboree are explained: the celebration, the demonstration to their spiritual father, and the participation by the tribe. The illustration builds (fig 39) an intriguing pattern of substance which shows from a network of lines, a sort of cryptogram of human forms. This surrealistic style emphasises the myth and dream of the Aboriginal culture. The illustrations show this corroboree and the participation by all of the tribe in their various capacities. The style of the illustration is distinctly individual. Through the techniques used, the distinct to the blurring figures give it an almost three-dimensional effect, adding to the mystery surrounding this celebration. The reader feels an appreciation in being allowed to participate in this part of the Aboriginal culture, to join in the dreaming, and to enter the secondary world.

In 1973, the Aboriginal artist, Dick Roughsey illustrated a striking children's picture book The Giant Devil Dingo. This stimulating and imaginative book was "Commended" in both the Picture Book of the Year and the Visual Arts Board Awards. The story is the legend of Gaiya, the giant devil-dingo which belongs to several tribes in the Lower Cape York Peninsula.

Roughsey uses strong colours to depict his landscape, against this background of trees and distance ranges, dry red sand and rocky outcrops, the fabled animals of his country's mythology appear, not as stylised as they are represented in his traditional art, but nevertheless spirit creatures coded in an acceptable way for Australian children. The protagonists are Aborigines, in conflict with the monster or spirit creatures, and this forms the focal point of the story.

The illustrations take up the double page with the text underneath, this is the format used in this and his subsequent books. The cover is bold and depicts one of the scenes in the book thus luring the reader to choose this picture book and inviting them to venture inside to find out what happens.

Two subsequent picture books, The Rainbow Serpent (1976) and The Quinkins (1979) received the Picture Book of the Year Award in 1976 and 1979 respectively. Both books are about legends from his own people. Unlike many Aboriginal tales, The Rainbow Serpent has a climax, the exciting scene, akin to Greek mythology, where the angry rainbow serpent thrashes about seeking revenge and the people turn themselves into birds and animals in order to escape. The Rainbow Serpent in Roughsey's illustrations (fig 40) is similarly depicted to Elizabeth Durack's Rainbow Serpent in The Way of the Whirlwind except the "personality"

of the characters strongly opposes her depiction.

Roughsey's Rainbow Serpent is a terrifying creature whereas Durack's was the "Spirit father of all children of the dream country".<sup>15</sup> The coloured illustrations are strong and evocative. The first opening could have been better depicted, because it is not all that obvious that the squiggle on the horizon is a rainbow serpent.

The Quinkins and Turramulli the Giant Quinkin

(1982) are a result of collaboration between Roughsey and Percy Trezise. In the latter book, the theme of the myth emerges quite clearly yet unobtrusively and for this reason, the structure of this story is more successful than that of The Quinkins. Because it belongs to the oral tradition, perhaps, this myth needs to be heard as well as read, so that its poetic qualities and strong sense of urgency can be fully realised.

The vigour of telling is superbly complemented by the bold lines and vivid colours of the paintings. The depiction of the landscape, its people and its spirit figures establishes the context and authenticity of the tale. The illustration I have chosen for comment is from Turramulli the Giant Quinkin (fig 41). It shows the fearful creature called Turramulli grasping for the aboriginal children who are assisted to safety by spider-like tentacles of the two Timara Quinkins. In the tradition of the books The Children of the Dark People and The Whirlwind, it is the

story of two children who are lost. This book differs because these children are being pursued by a giant mythical Being and his demise causes features in the land which can be recognised by the reader or visitor to the Cape York Peninsula area of Australia.

The fourth book in the series called Banana Bird and the Snake Men (1980) uses the same illustrative techniques as the other books in the series. The bold cover depicts one of the scenes in the book showing the snake men who were able to change themselves into kangaroos, changing themselves into snakes in order to hide in the long grass and wait for Banana Bird man to come down out of the lady-apple tree, up which he had climbed for safety. The illustrations are bold and arresting, yet, individual in interpretation. Dick Roughsey has the illustrations illuminating his text and creates an illusion of beauty and fantasy.

The Snake men attacking the Banana Bird man could be terrifying to children, in much the same way as fairy-tale giants. The illustration (fig 42) shows the snakes with their evil red eyes, in various positions waiting to dive onto the body, the body has one arm eaten away. The clue remaining for Coucal Bird man, the brother of Banana Bird man were the tree knocked over, and one foot lying next to the sleeping snakes. When the Bird men return to kill the snakes, we look at the pictures, and wonder why



the Snake men do not wake up with the sound of the fire burning around them. We are told in the text that the fire was "magic", it could burn without making any smoke or noise. The illustration shows the snakes threshing about in very vivid colour, with swirls of yellow, orange and red paint. We are later told in the text that the holes left by the five escaping Snake men became five rivers, which flowed from the low plateau now called "the Desert" -- a place where the grass will not grow since this magical fire.

The illustrations have story-telling qualities so that the action, mood, theme, setting and storyline are revealed. It is in this listening circle, that not only Aboriginal children but also all children, are made aware of the social and spatial relationships framed within an increasing appreciation of the Aboriginal Dreamtime.

. . . material is scaled down and simplified for children in keeping with the Aborigines' quite sophisticated approach to what children could and should learn, and how they could best do this.<sup>16</sup>

The fantasy of these Aboriginal myths has so deeply impressed each artist studied in this chapter, that their interpretation of them reflects the imagery and sensitivity of the stories on which they are based. These stories so imaginatively realised, introduces urban Australian children to a world that is stimulating. The appeal lies partly in the novelty of such a vision, but mostly in the styles adopted by each individual illustrator.

Each interpretation is individual, ranging from "bark" paintings to surrealistic-style drawings. These Aboriginal myths and legends are a unique literary form. Through colour, medium, imagery and technique, the illustrations are in harmony with the author's perspective extending the reader's active participation and story comprehension.

Fig. 33. A. Roberts' painting for "Mirram and Wareen The Hunters", The Dreamtime. Mountford (1965)

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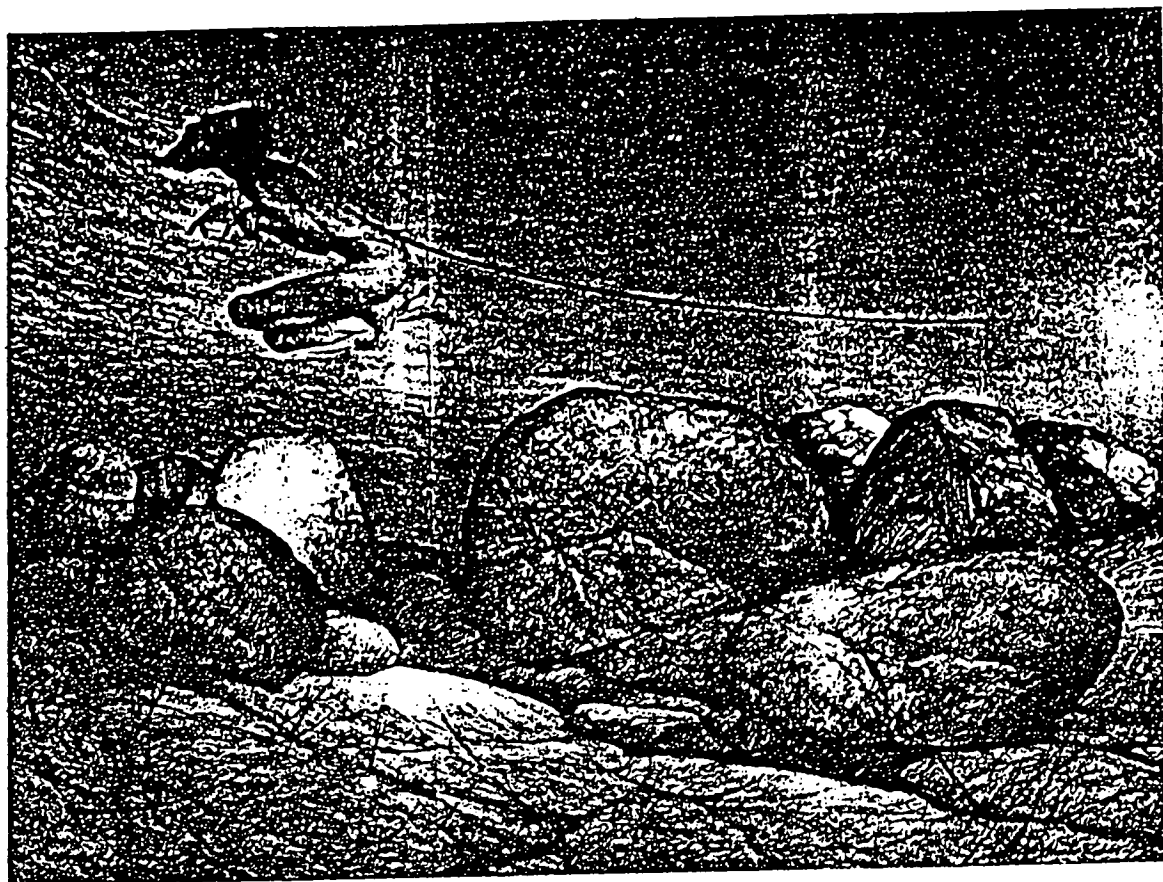


Fig. 32. A. Roberts' black and white sketch for "Mirram and Wareen The Hunters", The Dreamtime. Mountford (1965)



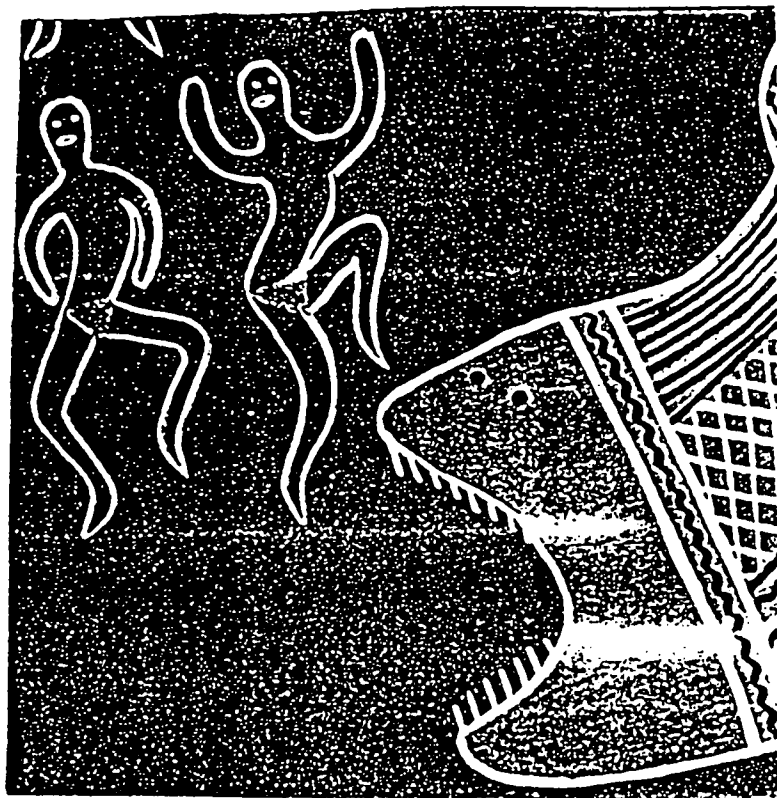


Fig. 35. Portrayal of Tasmanian Aboriginal Dreamtime in Touch the Morning: Tasmanian Native Legends, Cotton (1979)



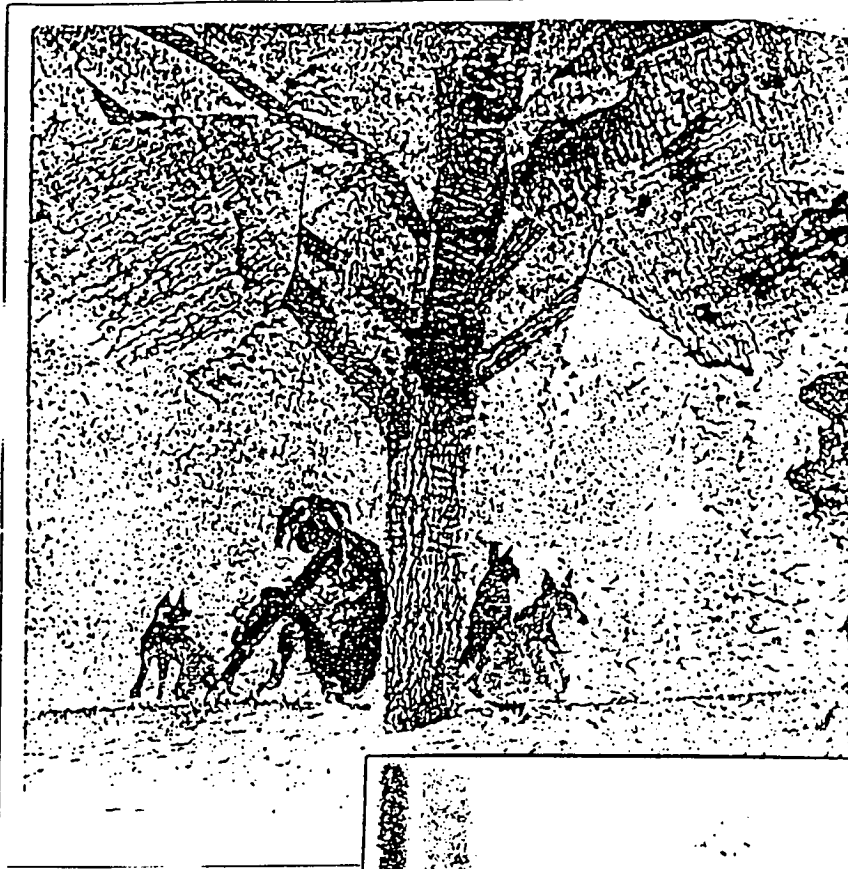


Fig. 38.



Fig. 37.

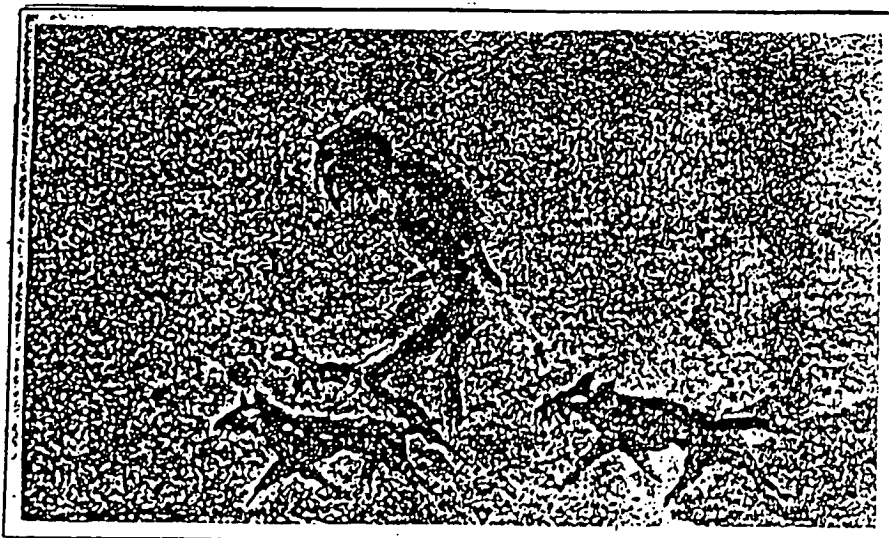


Fig. 36.



Fig. 39. Depiction of the corroboree in "Bilbarr, Waitch and Koomurra, "Aboriginal Legends from Bibulman Tribe, Bennell and Thomas (1981).

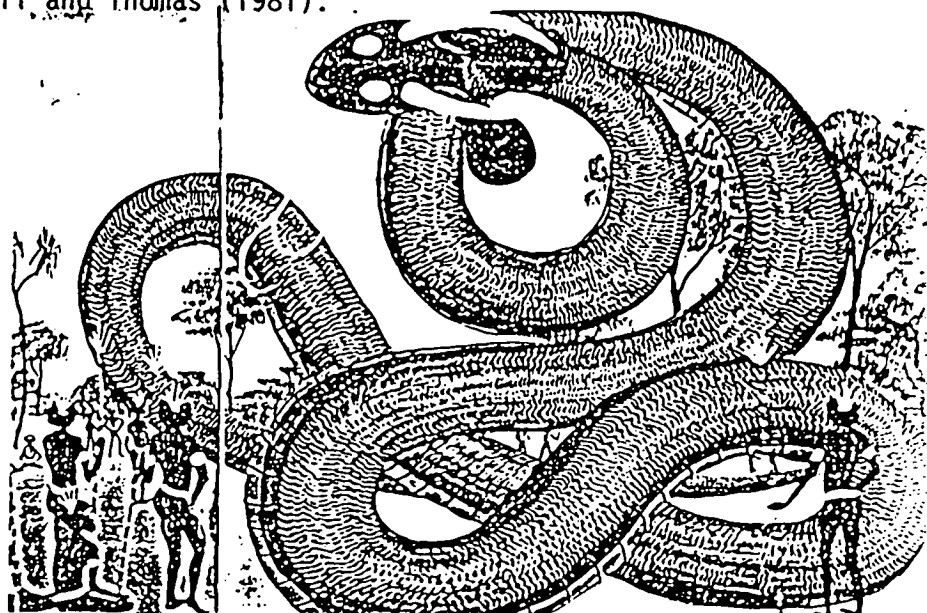
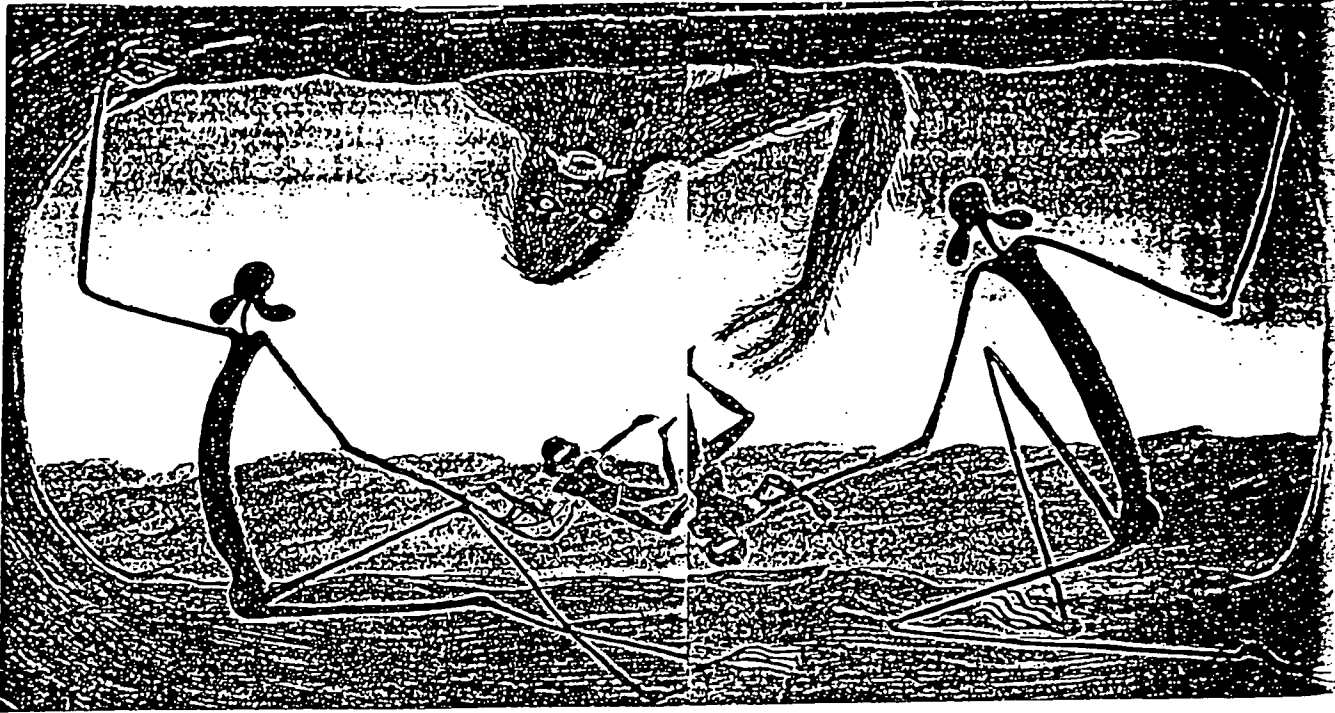


Fig. 40. Illustration of The Rainbow Serpent in The Rainbow Serpent, Roughsey (1976).

Fig. 41. Roughsey's depiction of Turramulli grasping for the two Timara Quinkins, Turramulli The Giant Quinkin Tresize, Roughsey (1981)



Just below the top of the cliff there was a cave. Inside it lived two Timara Quinkin. They had shivered in fright when they had heard Turramulli stamping above them. Now they were peering fearfully upwards and saw the two children falling toward them, followed by Turramulli.

Quickly, the two Timara reached out their long thin arms and each caught a child, pulling them to safety. Turramulli hurried past, becoming *Wock, Wock, Wock*, as he fell toward the rocks below.

Fig. 42. Roughsey's description of the Snake men attacking the Banana Bird man's body, Banana Bird and the Snake Men, Tresize, Roughsey (1980).



The Snake men did not know that the fire was coming! ... was a magic fire which burned without making any smoke or noise.

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## CHAPTER NINE

MARGARET HORDER & ANNETTE MACARTHUR-ONSLOW

The climate and technology after the Second World War was favourable in most Western countries for the production of children's books of a high standard. The children's library movement in the United States had encouraged an appreciation of such books and this had spread to the United Kingdom and Australia, and so a knowledgeable and educated public for children's books was being created. Technological advances had been made in printing techniques and book production.

It took until the 1970's for those concerned with children's book publishing in Australia to achieve the techniques necessary to produce picture books of high quality, success, as mentioned previously, came earlier with the storybook.

In the United Kingdom, by the late 1930s, some publishers of children's books such as Oxford University Press and Methuen, were issuing their story books with black and white illustrations either in the text, or full page, but by using a better quality paper. Paying more attention to design they created more attractive books. Most black and white illustrations were line drawings, printed either on the text page or on a separate page of the same paper, as

it was unnecessary to use the half-tone plate for such reproduction.

This gave the artist more flexibility, and the illustration could be placed where it was most relevant, even beside the actual words. The use of the double-page spread became common, marginal illustrations flowed into the text, and there was no longer the formal separation which had been the convention for some years. Examples of illustrators such as Brian Wildsmith, Margaret Horder and Annette MacArthur-Onslow used this form of illustration and used it mostly in books where the story was dominant.

The Australian artist, Margaret Horder, made an exceptional contribution to this form of illustration in Australia. She preferred to work in black and white and she designed dust jackets. She once remarked:

I am not happy working in full colour -- I prefer a limited colour scheme, and like the jacket treatment to have some relationship to the technique of the illustrations.

Noreen Shelley comments on her work:

As you examine Margaret's drawings you will recognise the superb quality of her draughtsmanship. It is always there, apparent in the strong sense of design, the beautiful free-flowing line -- the wonderfully expressive line that almost sings, yet is always perfectly controlled. There's nothing haphazard about it. And you will also be aware of her mastery of tone; the solid weight against white, or the lingering black that is almost grey, set against the sharpness of white with its feeling of space.

Margaret Horder illustrated Nan Chauncy's first book They Found a Cave, published in London in 1948. The small illustrations (fig 43) throughout the text, or appearing as tailpieces of chapter headings, are economical, often warm and humorous, and develop descriptions made in the story. Margaret admitted finding They Found a Cave particularly challenging to illustrate as she had been absent from Australia for so long, and had never visited Tasmania. She illustrated two more of Nan Chauncy's books A Fortune for the Brave (1954) and Tiger in the Bush (1957).

Nan Chauncy started her career as a writer for children with They Found a Cave, she consistently described life in Tasmania in all her novels. Before she ventured to create her first fantasy, she established herself as one of the finest authors of realistic stories in Tiger in The Bush which was awarded the Children's Book Council of Australia's Book of the Year Award in 1958, and Devil's Hill (1958) which was again awarded the same award in 1959. The appearance of the book Tangara (1960) is significant because it is one of the first "time fantasies" to be attempted in Australia and secondly Nan Chauncy is one of the first authors for children to have the courage to face the horror and tragedy of Tasmanian history. Chauncy aggressively expresses her anger at white Australians in Tangara. It is regrettable that Margaret Horder did not get the opportunity to illustrate this moving book. Illustrations were done by Brian Wildsmith with little feeling for the life and history

of the Tasmanian aboriginals or the Tasmanian landscape itself.

Margaret Horder also illustrated many books by Joan Phipson for example, Good Luck to the Rider (1953) and Birkin (1965) which while not being fantasy stories, nevertheless, indicate the development of her approach. She did not just embellish Joan Phipson's books with enlivening pictures, but in the tradition of the great illustrators, she extended them, giving them almost another dimension. Horder suggested the mood by <sup>"</sup>deft scenes or vignettes giving an impression of fleeting glimpses into the lives of the characters, creating the effects of speed of movement, or casual glances, so that the atmosphere is subtly created rather than directly stated. <sup>"</sup><sup>3</sup> In reply to a question as to whether she had any preferences for her own illustrations she wrote:

I like some of those in Birkin -- the little girl riding the steer through the dusty town for instance -- better than some I have done. As a whole I am happiest with the drawings for Patricia Wrightson's Down to Earth. We worked very closely on this book and found the setting for the "cuckoo-clock houses" whilst poking around Elizabeth Bay. I enjoy my drawing of the Cat Woman coming down McElhone Stairs most (fig 44). It was stimulating to have characters that really needed creating. On the whole it is the book I had most fun with.<sup>4</sup>

Margaret Horder's depiction of the "Cat Woman" in Down to Earth, is a fantasy figure, yet the illustrator has placed her in the Primary World, that of McElhone Stairs to give her a "sense of place". These place names or generic names

used in fantasy works have much the same effect of suggesting the real nature of the place or thing named. Tolkien recognises that as a "sub-creator", one of the first tasks is to select appropriate names, this is what Horder and Wrightson have done in Down to Earth.

Patricia Wrightson is now internationally recognised as one of the finest authors for children. Like Nan Chauncy, she started her career as a realistic author for children with The Crooked Snake (1955) which won the Australian Children's Book Council Award in 1956. As the mode of her writing has moved towards fantasy from realistic novels, so her subjects have also moved from the world of childhood to the core of human experience such as sex and death in her most recent novels.

In this study of Margaret Horder's illustrations for Patricia Wrightson's work, I feel it is important firstly to establish the development of Wrightson's fantasy through reference to her earlier realistic novels such as The Crooked Snake and Rocks of Honey (1960). I will examine closely Margaret Horder's work in relationship to the novels Down to Earth (1965) and I Own the Racecourse (1968).

The English critic John Rowe Townsend points out that since her first novel Wrightson has shown "an unusually strong sense of place."<sup>5</sup> This applies not only to the landscape of her novels but also to the subjects. In The

Crooked Snake she brings out the idea of conservation and in her third novel, Rocks of Honey she deals with a white Australian boy who becomes aware of the Aboriginal heritage of the land and also with an Aboriginal boy who learns not to feel ashamed of his race. This book shows us rudiments of her later preoccupation with the relationship between the land and the two peoples (white Australians and the "true Australians").<sup>6</sup> The book also suggests her changing interest from realism to fantasy.

Wrightson explores further the perception of familiar reality in Down to Earth in which two children in modern Sydney encounter a boy from outer space. To the children who cannot believe that the boy is different from them since he looks like them, the boy says;

"You don't know enough. You think you can see me, but you can't really; because I'm quite outside the range of what your brain was built to see. But your mind realises there's another mind there, a sort of person, so your mind makes the picture it always does make for that sort of thing and you think you're really seeing me. To you I just look like an Earth person, because that's the only sort your brain can see." . . . We can't even tell each other. Our minds can only take in what they can understand. I say you're not purple with horns, and you say you're not purple with horns, and we think we're saying the same thing but perhaps we each mean something different."<sup>7</sup>

Margaret Horder allows Patricia Wrightson's text to stand alone in this instance, she does not have a sketch of her impression of the boy. Horder here, allows the reader to apply his or her own imagination. The children in the story

know there is a stranger in their midst, the illustrations give clues. Chapter two called "The Invisible Stranger" shows a sketch (fig 45) of the two children looking around the door into a room that has been upturned -- the text identifies the room as the garage, and the children looking for some identification of the noise.<sup>8</sup>

Margaret Horder's sketches are once again black and white. These sketches appear at the beginning of each chapter and identified by a chapter heading, they also appear as chapter ends more in the decorative style apparently with little enhancement of the text but retaining the atmosphere. In Chapter 19 "The Hour of Escape" the illustration spreads across two pages,<sup>9</sup> like a stage set to show the scene. If imagination is a personal capacity then Horder attempts to involve the "looker". In Horder's work, the viewer is a performer, making sense of, and participating in the scene. The scene (fig 46) shows a very detailed sketch of the harbour with search lights, a destroyer and a tiny sketch of the boat in which the visitors from another planet escape. Unless one looks closely one would miss the boat because it fades into insignificance against the harbour cranes. The description in the book holds the interest of the reader and the illustrations help to build the climax. The reader in this instance, responds not merely to what happens, but also to what might happen if the boy does not escape!

The book is a comical and satirical sketch of a modern society from a different perspective. The children are amazed that the boy shows interest in the things which seem ordinary and boring to them. What the boy from outer space sees in the mundane affairs of people in Sydney is:

the vigour of life. The wilderness and youth of everything. It's gay and mad and young and fierce. It feels like a bonfire<sup>10</sup> on a cold night. It's exploding with life.

This is further reinforced by Margaret Horder's sketch of Martin "jumping for joy" as an end to the chapter. Rocks of Honey and Down to Earth foreshadow some of the preoccupations which Patricia Wrightson develops in her later novels.

The different vision of reality as seen through the eyes of the boy who is abnormal, and not like other children is also the theme of the next novel, I Own the Racecourse! (1968). Wrightson describes the boy using metaphors to depict his abnormality:

Andy lived between a closed window. When he smiled his warm smile and spoke a little too loudly, it was as if he was speaking through the glass. . . . Even his face looked a little distorted, as things sometimes look through glass.<sup>11</sup>

In the beginning Margaret Horder shows Andy as a shadowed figure viewing life from the shadows. Wrightson displays Andy's view of reality from "within the glass" which clashes with the other children's. His friends are alarmed by the fact that Andy really believes that he owns the racecourse, which he bought from an old tramp for three dollars. They



try in vain to make Andy understand what is real and what is not, and what ownership means. One of the children, Joe, is concerned about a disaster which Andy may have to face eventually due to his illusion. The thing which makes it harder for the children to wake up Andy to reality is that the workers at the racecourse start making Andy an idol and calling him "the owner".

Andy uses the cliff to view the races and Margaret Horder's sketches (fig 47) give the impression of viewing the racecourse from this cliff.

. . . one thing to own the racecourse in a quiet way, watching it and talking to the men who worked there. It was quite another thing to go striding into the middle of it under all the lights, where crowds of people could stare at him. Andy was going to sit on the cliff and dream about it.<sup>12</sup>

Patricia Wrightson concludes the story with a neat solution to the issue of reality and ownership. The adult people involved in the racecourse also start worrying about the consequences since things are getting out of hand. Andy organises a party at the racecourse which causes some embarrassment on the part of the management. They must find a solution from Andy's point of view, so the committee of the racecourse offers Andy ten dollars to buy the racecourse. The last page ends with an illustration (fig 48) on the bottom lefthand corner depicting a pile of rubbish containing streamers and a broom leaning against the pile - the end of a dream! This is summed up by the last line:

"She's not mine," said Andy. "I sold her, see."<sup>13</sup>

Both Down to Earth and I Own the Racecourse! are fantasies because through the conscious lives of the characters in their setting, the boundaries between reality and fantasy are explored. This was the last book written by Patricia Wrightson that Margaret Horder illustrated, it would have been interesting to have had the opportunity to see Wrightson's Wirrum Trilogy interpreted by Margaret Horder. Margaret Horder in her career as an illustrator did not move into illustrating picture books unlike Annette Macarthur-Onslow, who began by illustrating other writer's storybooks and moved into writing and illustrating picture books.

Annette MacArthur-Onslow's strongly individual style of black and white illustrations (fig 49) have been compared in her earlier work for Nan Chauncy's Half a World Away (1962) and The Roaring 40 (1963), to that of Margaret Horder. I see her style of drawings as impressionistic and very different from any other illustrator in Australia at that time, though akin to such artists as Brian Wildsmith who also illustrated Nan Chauncy's work. Her sketches adorn Nan Chauncy's work in much the same way as Margaret Horder's do: beginning chapters, sometimes within the text covering the double page. They depict scenes identifying the setting, the characters, climate, and thus illuminating the

text and assisting the reader's imagination and reconstruction of the scenes.

Annette MacArthur-Onslow is well known for her haunting paintings in The Man from Snowy River (1977). These illustrations (fig 50) are impressionistic and fluid, revealing on each double-page spread a dreamy study in glowing colours. Her illustrations suggest speed and grace of the horses, and the tense excitement of the chase. As her own books show she has a real understanding of animals - wild, not cuddly, domesticated animals; she has studied them with an artist's detachment acute yet vivid and written about them in several books with the same honesty and observation that characterise her drawings.

MacArthur-Onslow's work gained by the use of colour. The contrast between these fluid coloured illustrations with her strong black and white drawings resulted in several distinguished books. Uhu was published in 1969. The sensitive use of colour added greatly to the appeal of this book. It received the Australian Children's Book of the Year in 1970. This book is beautifully illustrated and shows unity and harmony of the illustrations and the text. They are poignantly done suggesting speed and movement through her line drawings. Although the themes in her earlier books are not of fantasy characters, nor fantasy settings, her style of illustrations such as those in The Man From Snowy River are abstract and haunting suggesting an

atmosphere of man's race for freedom, pitting himself against nature, and the wild horse.

Minnie (1971) is a story of a cat whose background was to trust no stranger, human or animal. The reader will eagerly follow Minnie's escapades as the haunting charm of Annette MacArthur-Onslow's illustrations (fig 51) bring her descriptive story to life. Minnie is described as the "spirit of the house". The story tells of the crisis that took place in Minnie's life when a family with two children came to stay, frightening Minnie into the wood. The bold crayon sketches help to create the atmosphere of the wood and the plight of the lost cat, and the fantasy she creates because of that fear.

The near woods were sharply etched in black and grey, the lower woods mysteriously lost in mist that had rolled up from the valley stream. There were furtive rustlings, scamperings, and tiny whispers. Minnie paused to trace her old scent . . . and suddenly, from quite close in the darkness of the woods, there came a series of long-drawn, spine-chilling screams. . .

The Giant Bamboo Happening (1982) by Annette MacArthur-Onslow is a rendition of "The Twelve days of Christmas". The garden really existed and so did the birds and (for a while) the ants -- and of course, the bird feeder made of bamboo. It was while writing a letter of thanks to the inventor of this ingenious creation, that the author became aware of more than meets the eye and was witness to a strange happening. The end-papers (fig 52) show birds in

various positions much more exotic but reminiscent of the end-papers of the earlier The Day of the Diprotodon by Peter Pavey (1976). The book starts with:

On the eastern coast of the Great South Land,  
somewhere between the mountains and the sea,  
is a wild rambling garden.<sup>15</sup>

It is in this garden that an army of ants attack everything, and destroys all growth. Because of this disaster the only one that could help is the inventor. The illustrations show the inventor looming like a Wizard, with flowing cape. Each day, new life is brought back into the garden with the themes from the twelve days of Christmas -- the colours change in the sketches from greens and greys until the eleven dancing ladies introduce pinks, oranges, yellows and blues.

How they all whirled and swirled and brought  
new life into the garden. Indeed there was so  
much excitement that the owner was  
bamboozled.<sup>16</sup>

This colour range used throughout the book is coded so the reader will understand that the disaster which occurred in the beginning is gradually "ordered" in the end, just like the fairy tale ending.

This fun and frolic lasted the full twelve days of Christmas, then it vanished leaving behind the inventor's creation, the bamboo bird feeder. The illustrations (fig 53) are vivid swirls of colour, spreading across the double page spread -- from one spiral, one can identify the objects then gradually blending into a blur of colour. The birds

come in to the garden to view the new bamboo. But we are told that this is not the end of the story. We turn to the last page, to find a small sketch of two turtle-doves pecking at the ground, accompanying this text:

Every quarter day and blue moon and every Christmas too, when the troughs are filled with nectar (made from a top secret recipe of bread, sugar and water) they have a special party to remember the Great Inventor. And when th party is over, there remain two turtledoves (who stay behind from the Happening) to clean up all the crumbs.<sup>17</sup>

In The Giant Bamboo Happening, Annette

MacArthur-Onslow through the relationship between words and pictures, leads the reader through an experience of the twelve days of an Australian Christmas. Through the illustrator's use of colour, style movement and medium she has built up the atmosphere of the story and at times the reader feels caught up in the frenzy, to bring new life back into the garden. Like Bruce Treloar's Bumble's Dream, the book is full of visual clues, and when compared with the theatre, the reader begins with the assumption that every detail is an intentional sign.

Both Margaret Horder and Annette MacArthur-Onslow have been concerned with giving a "sense of place" to their fantasy figures. Both have shown their fantasy characters as "larger than life" or "different" in some way, and used different artistic styles to depict these characters. Horder's work was depicted in black and white where

MacArthur-Onslow used colour and black and white in a variety of techniques and styles.

These illustrators have been important in the development of fantasy illustration in Australia because they provide that link between the illustrated storybook and the picture book -- book illustration as a narrative medium, and not merely as decoration.

Fig. 43. M. Horder's cat woman from Down to Earth, Wrightson, (1965)



Fig. 44. M. Horder's small text illustration from They Found A Cave, Chauncy (1948)



## 2 : *The Invisible Stranger*

Fig. 45. M. Horder's chapter sketch for Down to Earth, Wrightson (1965)



Fig. 46. M. Horder's detailed sketch of the harbour scene and the escape. Down to Earth. Wrightson (1965)

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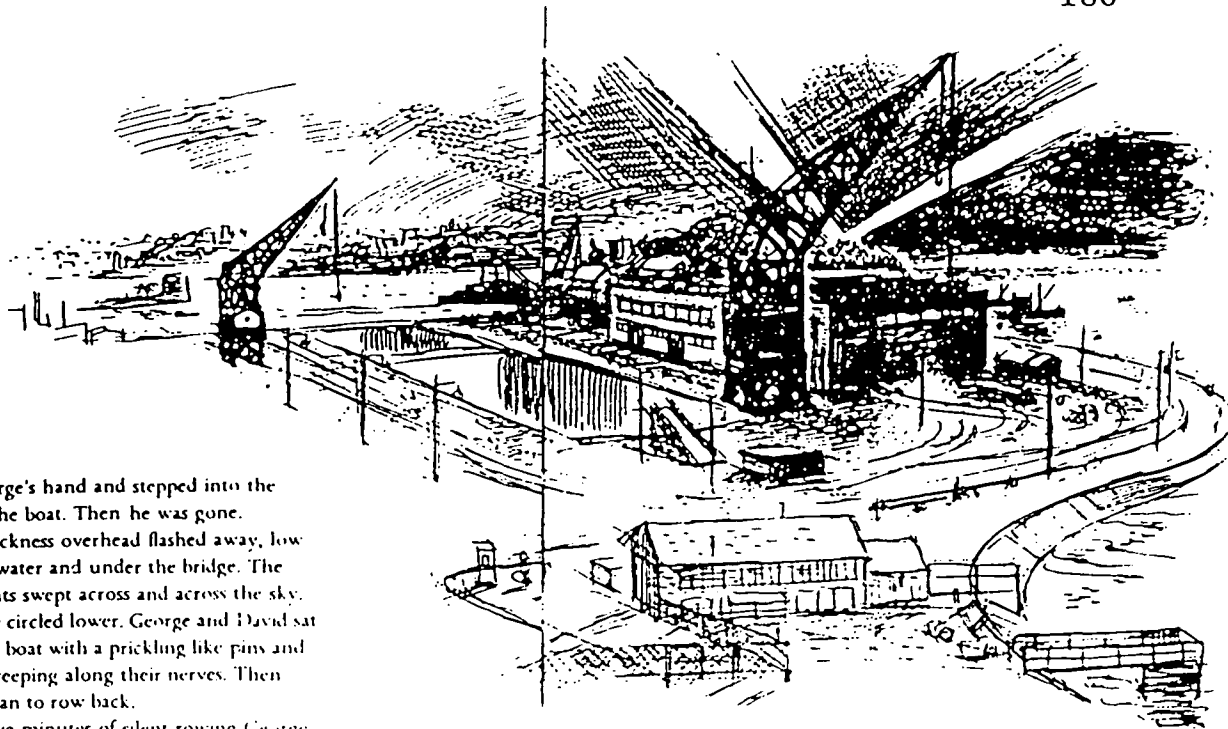
over George's hand and stepped into the stern of the boat. Then he was gone.

The blackness overhead flashed away, low over the water and under the bridge. The searchlights swept across and across the sky. The plane circled lower. George and David sat on in the boat with a prickling like pins and needles creeping along their nerves. Then David began to row back.

After five minutes of silent rowing George said with certainty, 'He's away.' Neither of them spoke again until the jetty loomed up, and then triumph, excitement and nervous relief welled up in George so that he began to laugh joyously. David joined in with a high-pitched giggle; and so, hilariously, they crept in under the jetty.

Two faces hung over its edge staring down at them, and Luke Day's voice called, 'He made it, did he?'

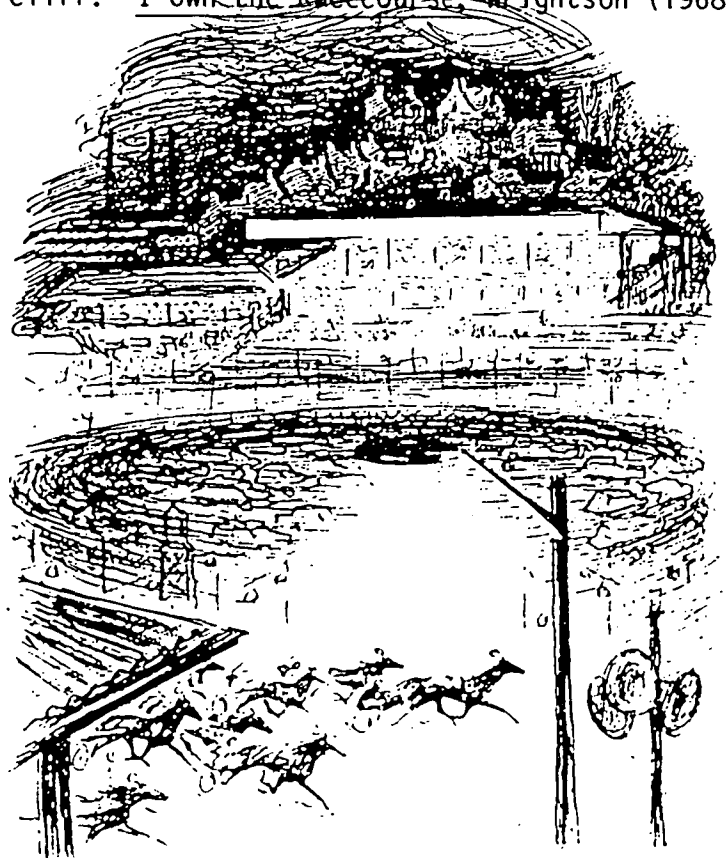
'Halfway to Venus by now. What happened to the professor?'



That meant Piddington was still there!

That made David and George giggle again. George climbed up to where searchlights lay at full length in the plants of the jetty. David crept into the boat with David and George. David sat on the back of the boat, his hands on his knees, and he looked at the boat as it lay on the water.

Fig. 47. M. Horder's sketch showing the Racecourse viewed from Andy's cliff. I Own the Racecourse. Wrightson (1968)



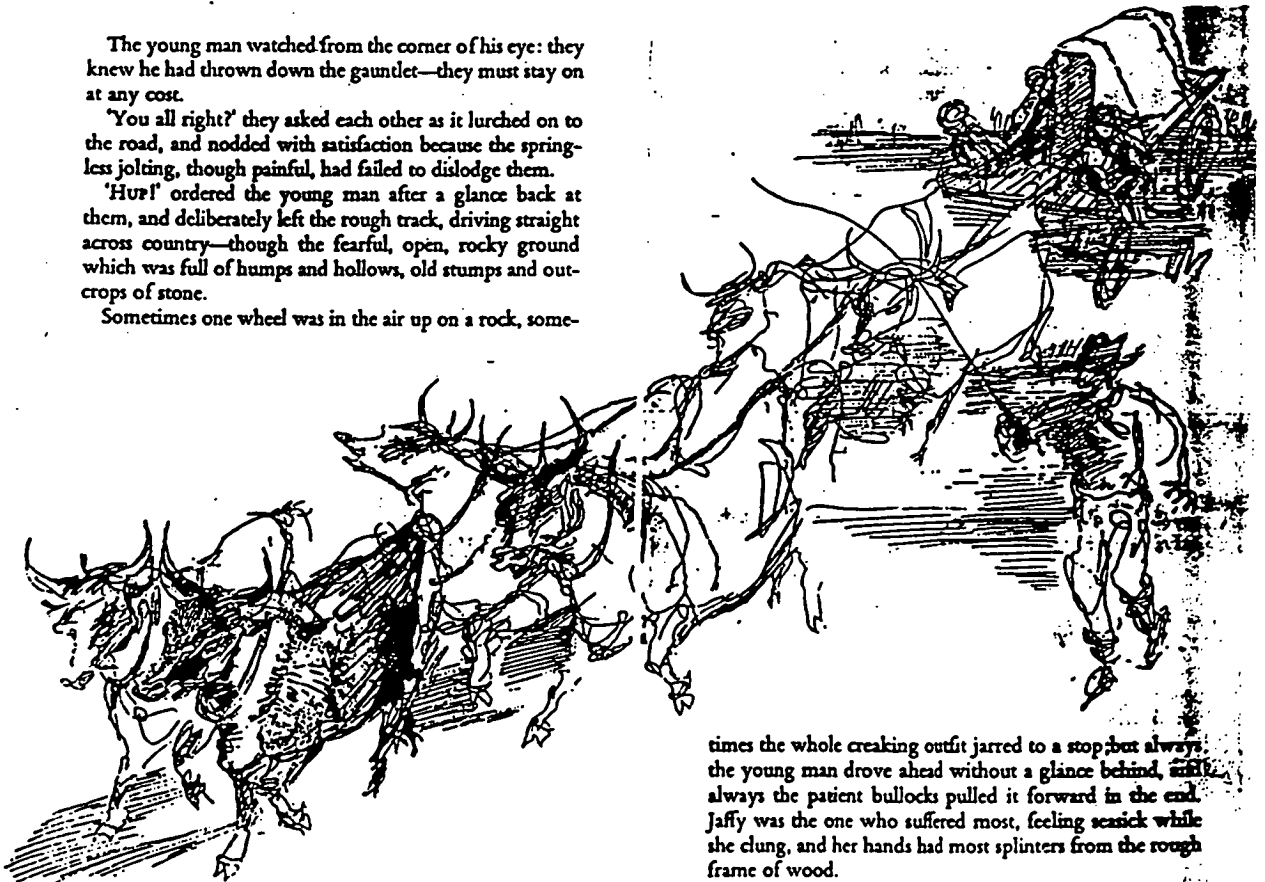


The young man watched from the corner of his eye: they knew he had thrown down the gauntlet—they must stay on at any cost.

'You all right?' they asked each other as it lurched on to the road, and nodded with satisfaction because the springless jolting, though painful, had failed to dislodge them.

'Hur!' ordered the young man after a glance back at them, and deliberately left the rough track, driving straight across country—though the fearful, open, rocky ground which was full of humps and hollows, old stumps and outcrops of stone.

Sometimes one wheel was in the air up on a rock, some-



times the whole creaking outfit jarred to a stop, but always the young man drove ahead without a glance behind, still always the patient bullocks pulled it forward in the end. Jaffy was the one who suffered most, feeling seasick while she clung, and her hands had most splinters from the rough frame of wood.

Fig. 49. A. MacArthur-Onslow's black and white illustration of The Roaring 40. Chauncy (1963)

Fig. 50. A. MacArthur-Onslow's haunting illustration for The Man from Snowy River, Paterson (1977).

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Minnie ran along the bank, under fallen boughs, through tangles of brambles and puddles of mud . . .

Suddenly the ground just opened in front of her . . . and . . .



Fig. 51. A. MacArthur-Onslow's cross-hatching style depicting Minnie, Minnie, MacArthur-Onslow (1971)

Fig. 52. Endpapers depicting the exotic birds, The Giant Bamboo Happening, MacArthur-Onslow (1982).

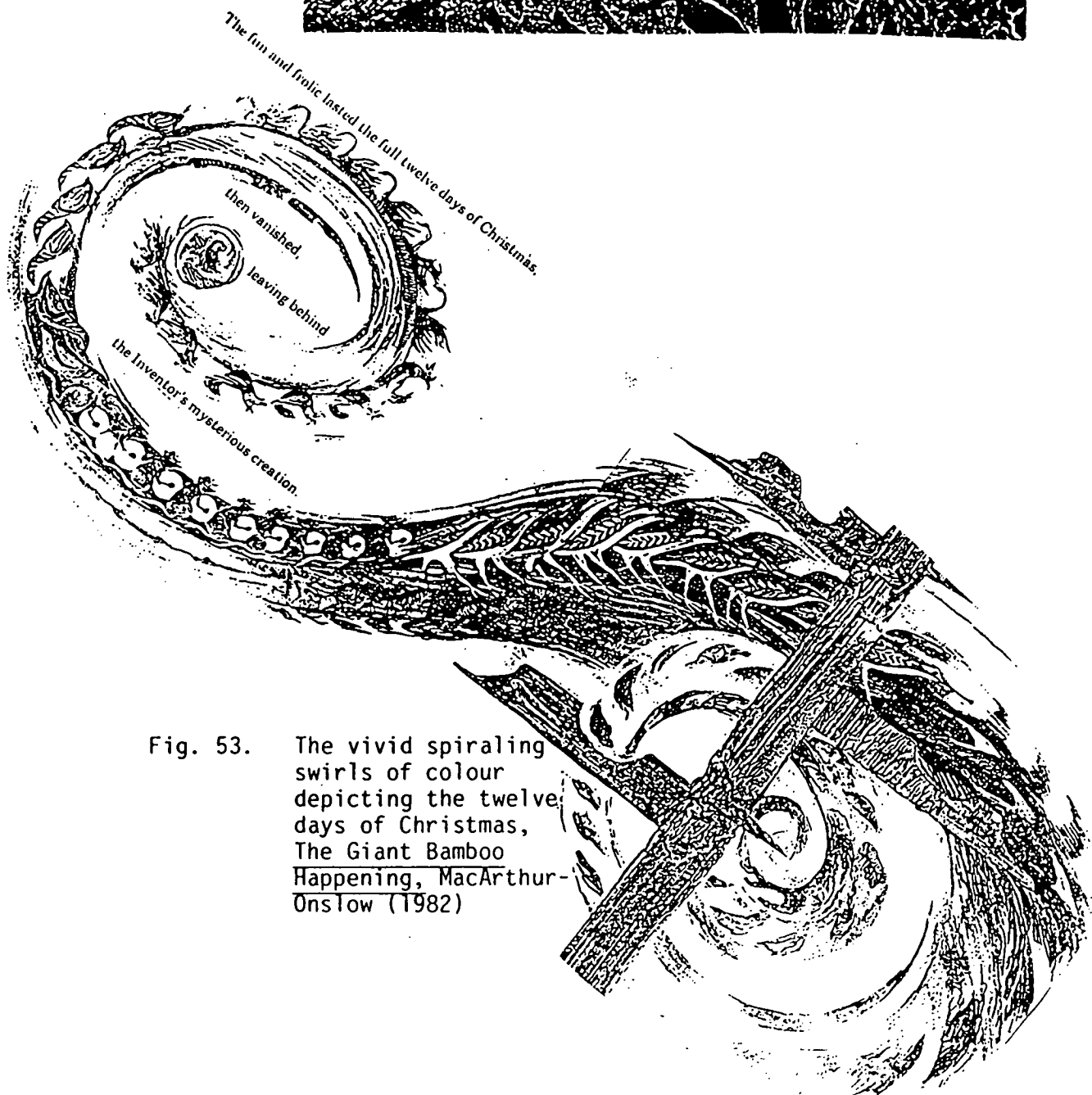
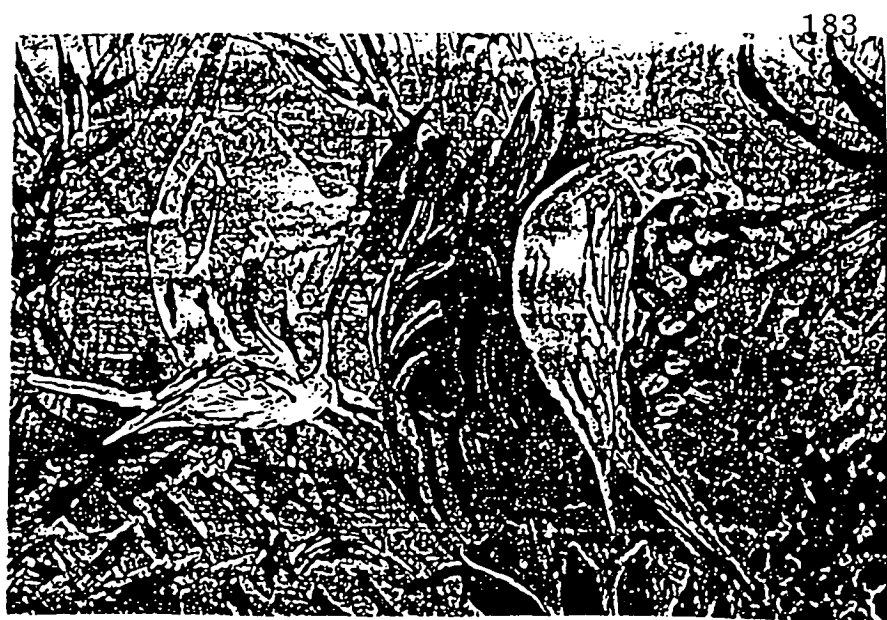


Fig. 53. The vivid spiraling swirls of colour depicting the twelve days of Christmas, The Giant Bamboo Happening, MacArthur-Onslow (1982)

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## CHAPTER TEN

RON BROOKS, DEBORAH & KILMENY NILAND, ROBERT INGPEN,

PETER PAVEY - FANTASY ILLUSTRATION IN

AUSTRALIAN CHILDREN'S PICTURE BOOKS

A major development in Australian culture in the 1970s was the greatly heightened interest in the visual arts and the dramatic increase in children's picture books. The Children's Book Council of Australia originated in 1946 and the Picture Book of the Year Award was established in 1952. In 1974 saw the establishment of Visual Arts Board independent Awards, their assessment varying from that of the Children's Book Council although conducted through this body. Diana Page says of the awards:

Book of the year awards have provided a great stimulus to children's literature by encouraging new writers and rewarding talent; moreover the increased sales from publicity surrounding the awards has attracted publishers who now bring out many more books of high quality. The role of judge has therefore been to choose the books not on the basis of what might be passingly popular, but on the basis of what meets these high standards of prose, illustration and production so that children's literature continues to improve.

No doubt those who have followed the Awards, have noted that they have not always been given. The Picture Book of the Year Award has been given only thirteen times out of the possible thirty two years of existence. Further to Diana Page's comment, as well as "increased sales", the Book of the Year Awards have heightened awareness and readership

among adults and children.

In this chapter, I have identified five illustrators who, because of their skills have been recognised by these awards, and are notably recognised as having produced work that can be recognised as fantasy illustration.

The Bunyip of Berkeley's Creek in which Ron Brooks' illustrations were so brilliantly integrated with Jenny Wagner's text, won him acclaim, and Picture Book of the Year Award in 1974. This was his first experience of translating his response to text in a picture book. Previously, he had illustrated the storybooks Mavis Thorpe Clark's Iron Mountain (1971), David Martin's Hughie (1972) and Joan Phipson's Bass and Billy Martin (1973).

The Bunyip of Berkeley's Creek visualised Australian mythology, as Desmond Digby's Waltzing Matilda (1971) had done, with imagination, feeling, and a masterly handling of the medium. Jenny Wagner chose the controversial mythical creature, the bunyip, to interpret the eighteenth-century theologian, George Berkeley's doctrine of human knowledge:

" . . . in truth, there is no such thing as one precise and definite signification annexed to any general name, they all signifying indifferently a great number of particular ideas." Therefore once the name is established, all that is needed<sup>2</sup> is to observe the new object to be like them.

The bunyip of Berkeley's Creek asks around various bush animals in search of his image among them, but cannot find the definite image of Bunyip. He then goes to a scientist. The scientist looks right through him, certain that buniyps "don't look like anything" for they "simply don't exist". In his despair, he one night finds another bunyip asking the same question, "What am I?" He happily tells her that she is a Bunyip since she looks like him. Brooks, like Wrightson and Allen, offers us an invitation to new perspectives on thought and thinking and reveals the cognitive dimensions of the fantasy.

The book is well produced, with the illustrations (fig 54) starting off in the centre of the page surrounded by a white border. As the text moves forward, the illustrations get larger. The text is surrounded by a picture frame placed around the illustrations, with each sentence commencing with a large coloured dropped capital. One feels in the beginning when viewing the book, that one in a sense is looking through a window, or a telescope. Though the heavy, sombre illustrations would not at first glance seem to attract children, the atmosphere and pathos are suggested by these dark pictures, and the mystery of identity is heightened by the queer, lumpish figures. Ron Brooks has managed to give the bunyip shape and personality, while still being appropriately elusive. He has portrayed the bunyip as a harmless creature, a creature to be loved, even admired for his quest, by the reader rather than



feared.

The book is illustrated by Ron Brooks somewhat after the style of Maurice Sendak. The truncated trees, are most un-Australian but Brooks has attempted to create a secondary world derived from Australia. The creatures are adequately portrayed except for the wallaby. The latter, according to the text is male, ". . . finished his drink and hopped off"<sup>3</sup> In the accompanying picture he has a large pouch complete with joey. [This gross editorial error is corrected in a later edition.] Brooks' greatest contribution to this book is perhaps in his use of colour. He has succeeded in conveying eerie unreality with muted tonings in swampy greens, yellows and browns. The book was a considerable feat, both imaginatively and technically, and marked the advent of a great illustrator in the Australian book world.

The second book from the Wagner-Brooks team is Aranea (1975). This story is about a garden spider, it has the same calm flow as The Bunyip of Berkeley's Creek but the storyline is comparatively weak. Nothing much happens to Aranea after all. She takes refuge in the house when a storm breaks, then goes back into the garden to get on with spinning her web. The reader's expectations are aroused early on by the oddly punctuated statement:

But no one ever saw Aranea. Until one night,  
near the end of summer.<sup>4</sup>

Feeling that we are back perhaps with Berkeley, we hasten on  
- but no one does see her. The statement seems to dangle  
like the spider's web.

The whole book apart from the lettering on the  
cover is done in black and white. Brooks' patterned  
drawings show to great advantage. The book uses the black  
border enclosing text and illustration. Aranea is a  
handsome book, as notable for its achievements as its  
shortcomings, the illustration of the storm and rain are  
particularly effective in creating a dramatic scene or  
episode. This book is predominantly a visual exercise,  
moving from frame to frame like a film.

Published in the same year as Aranea is Annie's  
Rainbow (1975) written and illustrated solely by Ron Brooks.  
Annie joins a long line of those who have followed rainbows.  
She goes along into a dark garden and finds the source of  
the rainbow, a fountain surrounded by garden gnomes (fig  
55). She is no mischievous Goldilocks or curious Alice, but  
a very timid child.

Annie left notes in secret places asking the  
rainbow to wait for her.<sup>5</sup>

It is not usually desirable for timid young girls  
to venture into dark gardens and to enter into conversations  
with strange men. This is the break in the story, the point

where Annie meets the strangely attired artist, and is presumably given his painting of the rainbow. The text leaves some doubt. Ron Brooks uses the technique of "incompletion", that is, gaps in the telling, similar to Briggs and Sterne. The last illustration (fig 56) shows Annie's empty bedroom with the picture of the rainbow over the bed - and Annie is in the picture. The reader is left wondering whether Annie has escaped to her dream world whether she had been granted her wish "If she couldn't take some home then Annie wished she never had to leave this beautiful place."<sup>6</sup>

Brooks' cover illustration is strongly reminiscent of Ida Rentoul Outhwaite's frontispiece for Blossom: A Fairy Story (1928). The illustrations until they reach the gnome beside the fountain are evocative, yet despite its careful deliberation and perhaps because of its stylised illustrations, it does not come alive as fantasy. Ron Brooks uses the reverse technique used in The Bunyip of Berkeley's Creek, his framed illustrations in Annie's Rainbow get smaller as the story progresses.

Ron Brooks' greatest triumph in the production of fantasy came with John Brown, Rose and the Midnight Cat (1977) in which he again collaborated with Jenny Wagner. This book is very much on the boundary between fantasy and reality. This book won both the Picture Book of the Year and Visual Arts Board Awards for 1978. The mastery of the

book lies in its total imaginative realisation of a human situation: a lonely old woman whose fireside is the setting for the rivalry between her dog and the stranger, the midnight cat, who threatens the dog's place in her affections, and who ultimately establishes his place at the fireside and as part of the home. " The drama is absorbing, and is successful because the reader is convinced of its truth. This is achieved by Brooks' unerring mastery in depicting each stage of the story without resorting to exaggeration. " 7 Through the illustrations Brooks has captured the poignant self assertion of the old lady. Yet, the precision and restraint establish a realistic setting. By using the double page spread (fig 57) Ron Brooks has broadened our view and enabled himself to create a wider frame of reference. The illustrations of the dust-cover and end-papers establish the rural setting with the somewhat neglected homestead. As the story proceeds the furniture, possessions, and costumes establish a sense of reality on which the story focuses. The coded information through detailed furniture, architecture and dress signify to the reader the importance of this information. The old woman's loneliness is overcome in this situation through her conversations with the animals. This anthropomorphising of the creatures in the story are part of the fantasy created in such a realistic setting. John Brown, Rose and the Midnight Cat is significant for the reason, that it does capture a preoccupation of our time, with the nuclear family and the concern with the young making an informed

appreciation of the old.

In The Pochetto Coat (1978) Brooks illustrates the text of fellow artist Ted Greenwood. The Pochetto Coat is a haunting collection of fable-like stories about the Pochetto Coat and the luck it brought its wearers. Brooks' black and white drawings, convincingly evoke an unfamiliar time and life in true harmony with Greenwood's stories of traditional clowns and jesters.

Ron Brooks says in relationship to his craft:

It is in the synthesis of all the various references and layers that I sometimes find a personal satisfaction beyond that of simply making a good book for kids . . . I'm always tempted to put more and more in, and I have to be careful not to overdo it. The challenge is to achieve this, while at the same time preserving the overall simplicity.

His characters although portrayed sometimes as large lumpy creatures they come alive as fantasy creatures within imaginative and powerful settings.

Deborah and Kilmeny Niland emerged as talented illustrators of fantasy works in 1973 after their illustrations for Banjo Paterson's poem Mulga Bill's Bicycle received the major Visual Arts Award for 1974. Their interpretation of this poem was original and highly amusing. They use a variety of techniques to portray the characters in the poem placing it in a believable setting. Mulga Bill is a memorable character whose facial features in particular

mirror all facets of expression ranging from exhilaration at pitting his strength against the machine; to fear when he realises he has no control over his destiny. One illustration (fig 58) shows Mulga Bill as a character "larger than life" bursting out of an oval frame: facial features out of shape; hair standing on end, mouth gaping, eyes closed blocking out the consequences to be revealed in the next illustration.

These two illustrators have gone on to illustrate a great number of story books containing collections of tales, poems and songs. In Tell Me Another Tale (1976) by Jean Chapman their rendition of earlier tales such as "Goldilocks" (fig 59) or "Little Red Riding Hood" (fig 60) found in this book, show the characters of these tales in a very original manner. They used a totally different rendition, their characters are strongly influenced by Helen Oxenbury and Maurice Sendak. Goldilocks awakening as depicted in Tell Me Another Tale can be compared with the reaction of Max when he meets the "Wild Things". Goldilocks awakens to find the three bears hovering over her, looking very surprised and angry. Fear is depicted in Goldilocks' stance, wide open mouth, plaits flying. The colours they used are light, and pretty, usually on a clear white background. In contrast to these pastel colours, the characters and animals are grotesque. There always seems to be a sly dog about to bite someone, an urchin howling, or some rogue trying to get the better of someone else. These

monstrous creatures are more ridiculous than frightening, and clearly belong to the world of fantasy. Their "human" characters are not realistic, for example, their facial features are either heavily exaggerated or almost featureless. These two illustrators also used balloon comments on the text (fig 61) as if in a private aside to the reader, to keep the reader guessing at what will be shown next.

The Nilands seem to have perfected a style which has changed little since Mulga Bill's Bicycle or Ruth Park's The Gigantic Balloon (1977). They have illustrated many books since their first success, and have also worked independently. Deborah Niland has been the more prolific, occasionally drawing a baleful face among the humorous ones. She has illustrated Velvet Paws and Whiskers (1979), The Sugar-Plum Christmas Book (1977), When the Wind Changed (1980), written by Ruth Park; and The Jacky Dandy Song Book. The Drover's Dream (1979) shows an interesting development in her style. These double-page drawings of animals such as a drover might dream of, queer creatures of the dream world, drawn in delicate colours, overprinted with a stippled effect, are somewhat haunting, though not with malevolent facial expressions. When the Wind Changed is an entertaining story of what happens to a little boy who loves to pull ugly faces until the day the wind changed and his face would not go back to normal.

Deborah Niland's rounded, cartoon style drawings suit this book so well, and her illustrations (fig 62) of the boy's ugly faces are suitably horrendous. There is a surprise ending which children love -- the little boy managed to thwart a bank robbery owing to his terrible face; and afterwards when his father is talking to him and telling him how he too, used to pull faces, just then the wind changes! The fantasy in these illustrations is the theme "what can maybe happen when the wind changes." The somewhat exaggerated faces pulled by the boy are a challenge to the reader to compete, it establishes a realistic goal for the reader to achieve. Children find a delight in watching the inevitable happen, because it had happened earlier in the story.

Kilmeny Niland, on the other hand, reflects more of the earlier view of childhood of the pre-World War II period. She shows more of the humour in her illustrations and less of the sinister touches seen in some of Deborah's drawings. She has illustrated Fairy Tale Picture Dictionary by Jane Wilton Smith and Pancakes and Painted Eggs (1981) by Jean Chapman. This is a treasure trove of stories and songs, poems and games, from the Easter lore of many countries. The cover is an invitation to all ages, it shows a delightfully friendly rabbit emerging from a colourful egg shell. Characters in the traditional customs of the past, characters that appeal in much the same way as Beatrix Potter's do with young children.



Deborah and Kilmeny Niland's illustrations of characters are more ridiculous than frightening, and clearly belong to the world of fantasy. The humor shown in their illustrations which give another dimension to the texts is not often sustained in children's picture books, and this is one of the reasons for their success in fantasy illustration. Deborah Niland has in her work, transformed the ordinary into fantasy whereas her sister, Kilmeny has depicted the "toy-coy" figures of an earlier period.

Robert Ingpen's work cannot be compared to the work of any of these five illustrators. He has the rare ability to show beauty in ordinary man-made objects in harmony with their settings: decaying old buildings, boats and punts. His illustrations such as these, have led many readers to experience what the London Observer says of the work of artist Robert Rauschenberg:

A feeling of some subliminal message being flashed from the canvas, something too quick for anything but the imagination to record.

His illustrations of Colin Thiele's work in Storm Boy (1974) and River Murray Mary (1979) create an atmosphere for the story, but tend to decorate the text, rather than elaborate it. His broader landscapes shown in Storm Boy capture the atmosphere of seashore and river verge in which the work is set. Although Ingpen won the Visual Arts Board Award in 1975, and although his work is artistically distinguished, he does not appear to have quite the involvement with the

story necessary for children's books.

In 1979, Robert Ingpen produced his first children's book called Australian Gnomes. The first in a trilogy, this book was totally different, describing the inhabitants of Australia who live in all parts of the country, but are not native to Australia, in a very detailed description both visually and with text. He thus introduced us to his interest in fantasy creatures -- these gnomes who have experiences, and formed part of our heritage. He followed the Australian Gnomes with the books The Voyage of the Poppykettle (1980) and the Unchosen Land (1981). In the two earlier books he purports to explain how the gnomes first arrived in Australia. These books appeal more to the older reader who has some knowledge of early Australian exploration. Through creating his Secondary World, Ingpen has allowed us to "see" the Primary World.

The Voyage of the Poppykettle suggests these gnomes came from Peru. They were a family of Gnomes who are aptly named Hairy Peruvians, who lived by fishing for anchovies in the great Pacific Ocean. When the shining Spaniards came and plundered their land, they decided to seek another home across the sea. They sailed from Peru in a sacred pot, called the Poppykettle, which they had brought down from the high Andes, rigging her out as a ship, and set off across the great ocean.

The book tells through the illustrations and text the many adventures they have before they found the new country. They had many narrow escapes but at last, they landed in southern Australia, and set off to explore the great new land. The book is profusely illustrated in both black and white, and colour, done in Ingpen's inimitable, photographic style. The illustrations help to show the plight of the early sailors and the desperation of the long voyage. Throughout the book there are clues to how these gnomes cope with the adventure. A particularly stunning coloured full-page illustration (fig 63) of an old woman's head rising out of the sea,<sup>10</sup> illustrates the fantasy created by Robert Ingpen.

Robert Ingpen could not resist at the end of this book leaving the reader to make further investigations into history by his combining fact and fiction. His technique used is similar to Margaret Holder's sketch in figure 48 or Ron Brook's sketch in figure 56 in the way the reader is left to determine what has happened or will happen to the characters in the future.

Through the third book, The Unchosen Land, the reader is told what has happened to these Hairy Peruvians. In Chapter One, Robert Ingpen writes:

This is a story of the Realtime and the Dreamtime. It tells of the Oldshadows who remember back to the dawn of time, of the Lilywhites who came from distant countries and of the Third People who came with them.

Sometimes the Third People are called  
gnomes.<sup>11</sup>

In this unusual book, the author/illustrator opens the way into a world of fantasy which has links with what the reader may believe to be reality. It possesses the quality which makes the reader think that perhaps these things may have happened! Ingpen has aimed for a much older readership for his trilogy.

Robert Ingpen uses single line framing around the text and illustration and a variety of techniques in presentation. There are pages of text, text and illustration framed next to one another, and double-page spread illustrations. The illustrations are bold and Ingpen has focused on the facial features of each of the Hairy Peruvians once in the text. These are illustrated as black and white sketches contrasted with the other illustrations which are large colourful paintings which build up a tapestry of the Australian landscape and an understanding of the Aboriginal culture. The illustration (fig 64) can be compared to Eddie Bennell and Anne Thomas's illustration (fig 39) of the Aboriginal corroboree -- the distinct to the blurring figures. Ingpen has used his illustrations as a means of entering other world views.

Through his book The Unchosen Land, Robert Ingpen tried to enter the Aboriginal Dreamtime through one of the Hairy Peruvians -- Arnica.

She would seek the aid of the Munkumboli to enter the Dreamtime forever, so that she might study and preserve the myths and spirits which had become vividly real to her during the days of prediction.<sup>12</sup>

The Hairy Peruvians walked, like the Australian illustrators, "the shadow line between reality and fantasy" whereas, the Aborigines like Munkumboli resumed the "spirit path" of their tribal wanderings".<sup>13</sup>

Peter Pavey is the last illustrator to be considered in this study. He is an artist of considerable talent who has expressed the desire to interpret only his own work although he began by illustrating Olaf Rhuben's text of The Day of the Diprotodon. The sensitive illustrations (fig 65) are printed in brown and white, and are remarkable for the effect they created using a single colour. The artist achieved great variation of tone using soft outlines with the skilful use of cross-hatching, in a manner reminiscent of Ron Brooks' work in Aranea. The covers and endpapers are an impressive reminder of the variety and liveliness obtainable in monotone, and show the richness and atmosphere of the land with the diprotodon deeply in its environment and the birds in the foreground. The illustrations show the climatic changes from the lushness of growth shown in the endpapers and beginning illustrations, to the barrenness of the desert, building up to the climax and death of the Diprotodon. The Day of the Diprotodon is an imaginative projection into that foreign country of the past reached only with the passport of art.

Peter Pavey states:

I could have done it (illustrations) in full colour. I chose to do it in this style because it's a historical storybook and I think full colour tends to make things immediate, as though it happened yesterday.<sup>14</sup>

In contrast, Peter Pavey produced a beautiful, but highly controlled use of colour in his counting book, One Dragon's Dream (1978) which won the Picture Book of the Year Award for 1980. This book is an exotic fantasy yet it is consistently logical, mathematical and conceptual. For all the appearance of overwhelming detail and the suggestion of confusion, it is a most elaborately contrived book. In addition to being a wonderfully original fantasy, it is also a counting book with a difference. Within each spread are matching numbers of objects -- some easy to find, and some not so easy. The fantasy begins with the dragon going to bed (fig 66) in the first two frames. Then in the third frame, the dream begins, the room remains the same, but the dream objects start to appear and tend to "clutter" the room, and extend the dream to include objects outside. Peter Pavey uses the technique of an open window or doorway to extend the dragon's dream. The dragon begins a journey through strange and exotic places and we are asked to participate with the dragon's dream following him through his terrifying journey until dawn breaks and he wakes. The final frame (fig 67) shows a scene depicted through the window of the animals departing, thus ending the dragon's dream. The young child/reader's conceptual and perceptual

development is maintained through a book such as The Dragon's Dream.

Peter Pavey states, that he is interested in:

how you can have themes flowing through a series of drawings. . . how you can use the words as a bridge between one illustration and the next.<sup>15</sup>

I'm Taggerty Toad (1980) is less "cluttered" than One Dragon's Dream, and shows a strong sense of rhythm and design in the illustrations, and a different colour range. In One Dragon's Dream Peter Pavey tended to use the oranges, browns and reds. In I'm Taggerty Toad he used the greens and yellows. Visually, though still leaning towards Sendak, Pavey also derives some motifs from Tenniel's illustrations of Alice in Wonderland -- notably the caterpillar, the dodo and the pool of tears. Despite these influences the work still presents a fresh and original approach. The text romps away in the beginning. However, this pace is not sustained throughout the book and makes it disappointing to read aloud. The text and illustration combine to leave the conclusion to the reader's imagination.

The boastful Taggerty Toad is reminiscent of the characters in the early fables. He tries to impress all the animals with his exploits and gamely limps off looking for more adventures, even after the tiger has chewed him up for tying a knot in his tail. The tiger is about to get his

revenge, and then on the next page a bit of Taggerty is missing, and so one assumes that he did what he boasted, so even though he could be considered a braggart, perhaps he did do all those things. This is a decision left to the reader on their perception of how the book began. The brilliantly coloured drawings (fig 68) have the same minute details that were such a feature of One Dragon's Dream. These illustrations depict a combination of characters ranging from kangaroos, emus and tigers, all placed in a universal setting. It is a pity Taggerty is depicted as green because toads are brown. This could spoil the authenticity of the story for some children or perhaps Peter Pavey used this to add to the fantasy of the character.

In his new picture book, Battles in the Bath (1982) Pavey has left the boundary country. In this story bathtime erupts into a fantastic extravaganza of strange animals. The shower curtain like a stage setting evolves into the background for a wild forest and eventually the bath itself moves off into exotic scenery where a river provides the central character, a girl, the opportunity to dive into the green depths below. Peter Pavey uses Sendak-like features on the face of this girl (fig 63) and in the beginning, her expressions vary from bored, irritated, sulky to some joy in her final actions. Battles in the Bath is an intriguing picture book at times almost frightening in its strange juxtaposition of animal parts. Peter Pavey states:



as an illustrator I'm interested in images that deal with a continuum between reality and fantasy and that's what it (Battles in the Bath) is about.<sup>16</sup>

It is disappointing that Peter Pavey has stopped writing and illustrating children's books and returned to the field of graphic art, because the Secondary Worlds he produced went deeper into the fantasy territories.

These five illustrators studied in this Chapter have used fantasy to create new perspectives of our world, and with varying degrees of success, each illustrator has attempted to create complete Secondary Worlds. They have drawn upon the child's eagerness to explore the boundaries, noting the actual in their work, and enjoying the imaginary. Each illustrator has blurred the borderlands of the actual and the fantastic.



No one saw him and no one spoke to him.

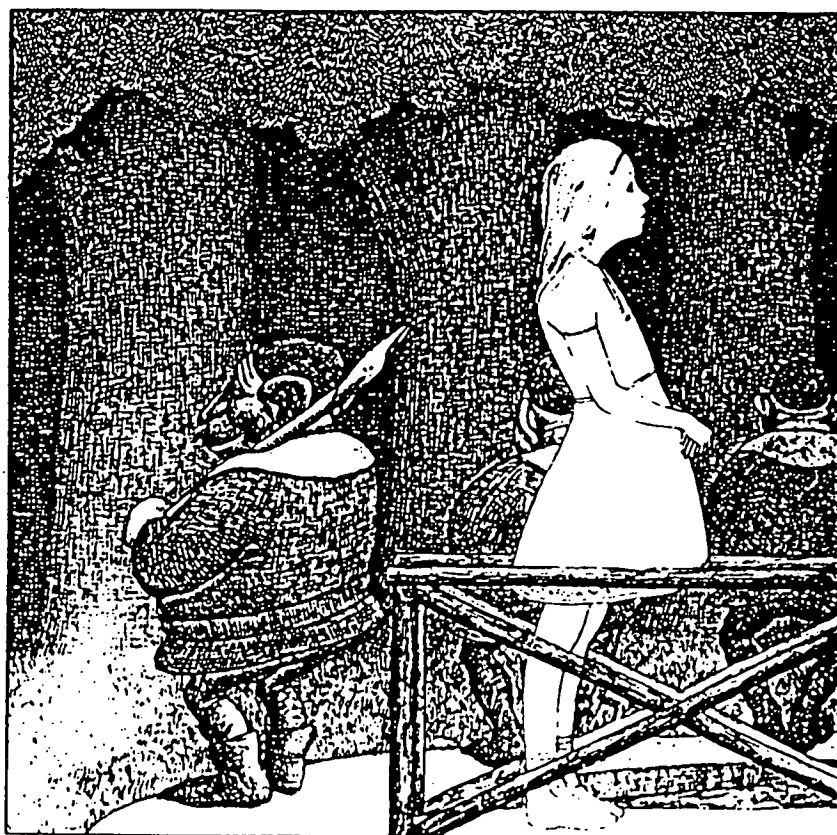


Fig. 55. Annie finds the source of the rainbow in Annie's Rainbow, Brooks (1975).

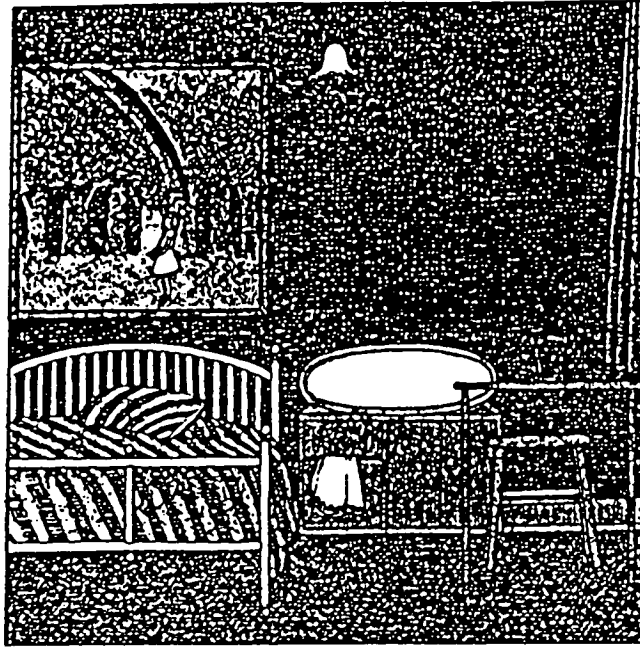
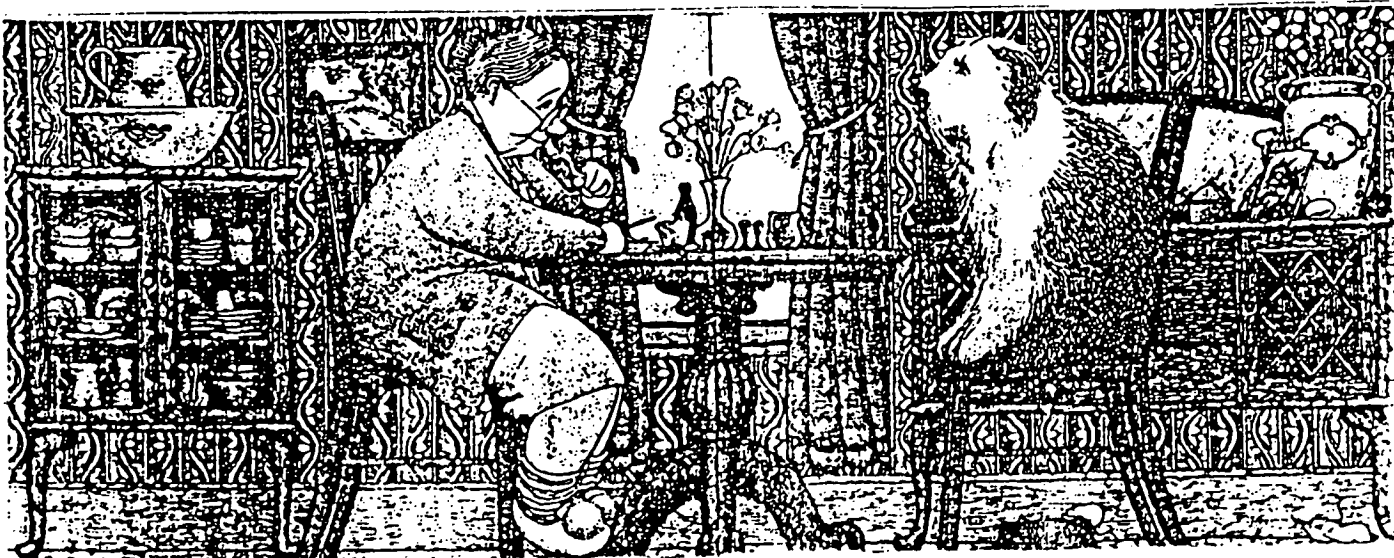


Fig. 57. Brooks' double page spread showing setting, characters, details in harmony with text in John Brown, Rose and the Midnight Cat, Wagner (1977)



"You don't need cat food."

"You've got me."



Fig. 58. D. & K. Niland's illustration of Mulga Bill shows him bursting from an oval. 207  
Mulga Bills' Bicycle,  
 Paterson (1974).

Fig. 60. D. & K. Niland's depiction of Little Red Riding Hood in Tell Me Another Tale, Chapman, (1976)



Fig. 59. Goldilocks' awakening as depicted by D & K. Niland in Tell Me Another Tale, Chapman (1976)

Fig. 61. Outrageous text drawings such as this knowing little bird add to the fun of the Niland sisters' illustrations. Chapman (1976)

Tell Me Another Tale

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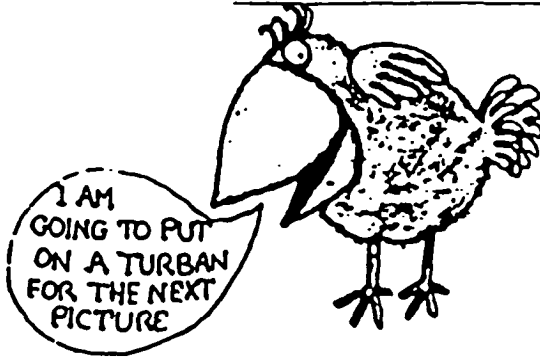


Fig. 62. D. Niland's depiction of the horrendous faces pulled by the boy in When the Wind Changed, Park (1980)

Fig. 63. R. Ingpen's stunning coloured illustration of an old woman's head rising out of the sea, The Voyage of the Poppykettle, Ingpen (1980).

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Fig. 64. R. Ingpen's using his illustration as a means of Arnica entering the Aboriginal Dreamtime The Unchosen Land, Ingpen (1981)



Fig. 65. P. Pavey's sensitive illustration showing variations in texture, tone, style and detail in The Day of the Diprotodon, Rhuben (1976)

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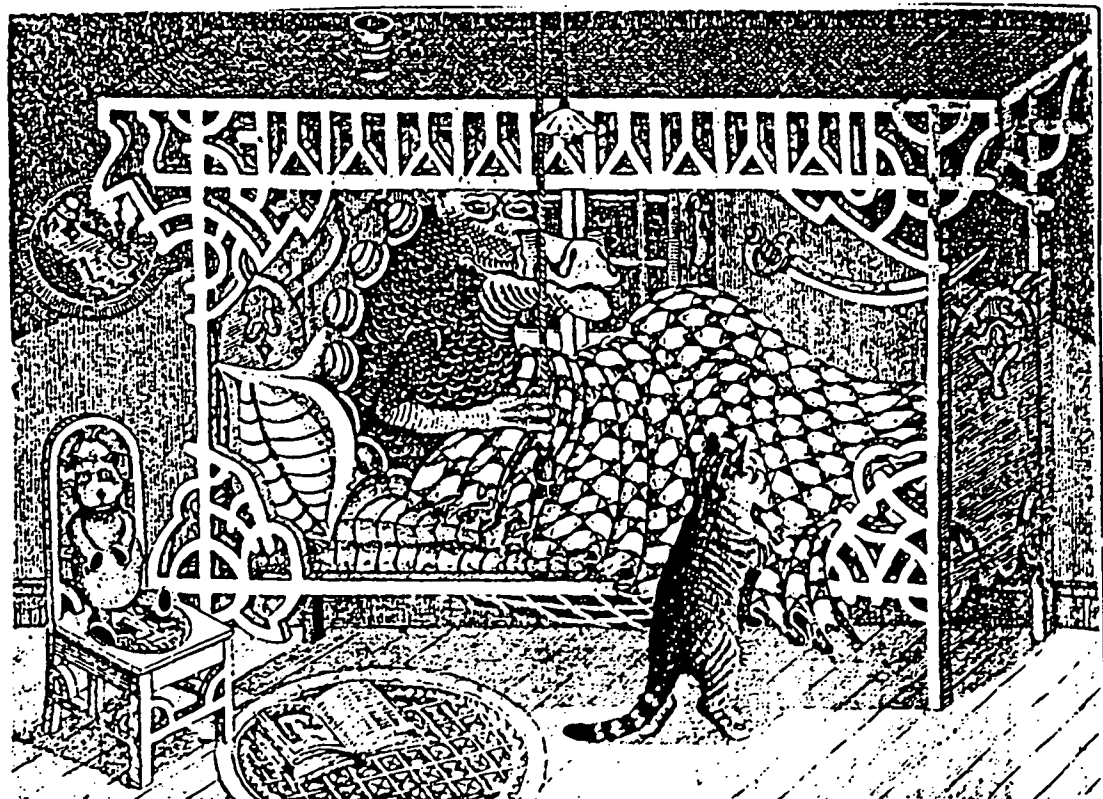


Fig. 66. P. Pavey's depiction of the Dragon going to bed in One Dragon's Dream, Pavey (1978)



Fig. 67. The final frame showing the "end of the dream" in One Dragon's Dream, Pavey (1978)

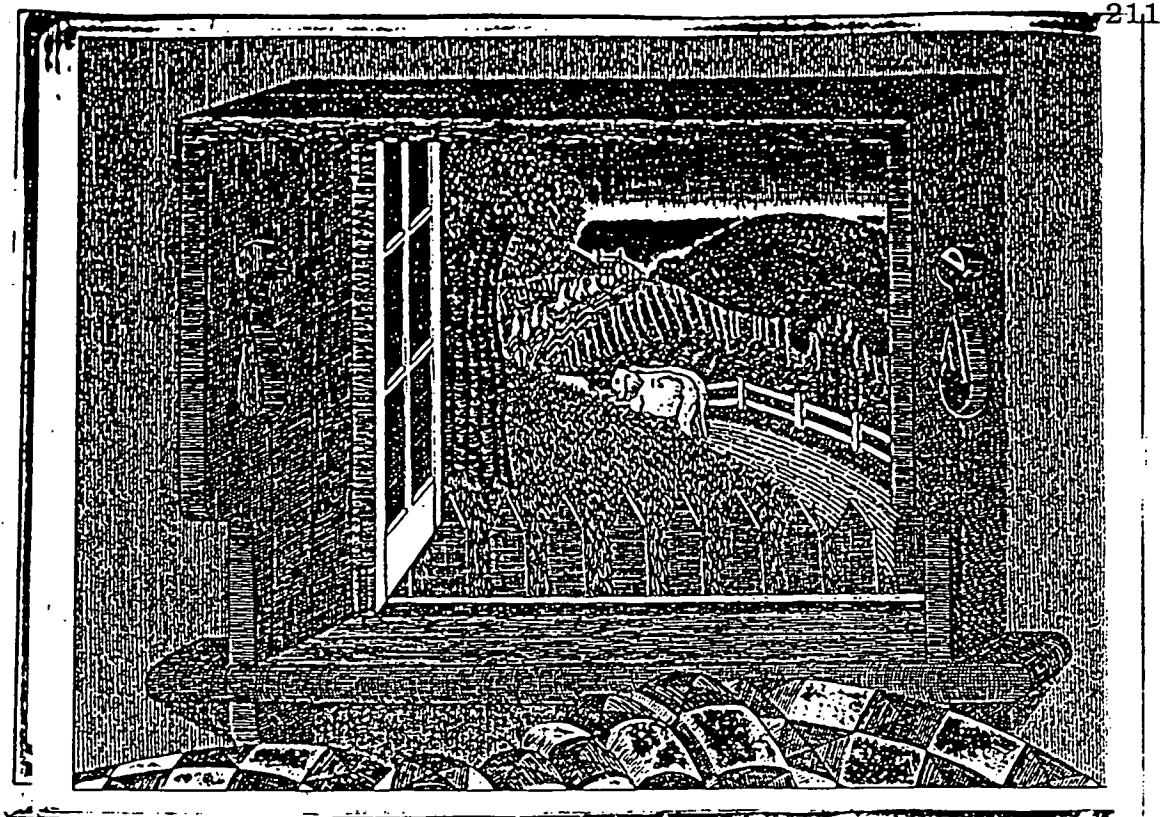


Fig. 68. P. Pavey's cover shows the brilliantly coloured drawing of Taggart's load, in I'm Taggart's Load, Pavey (1980)

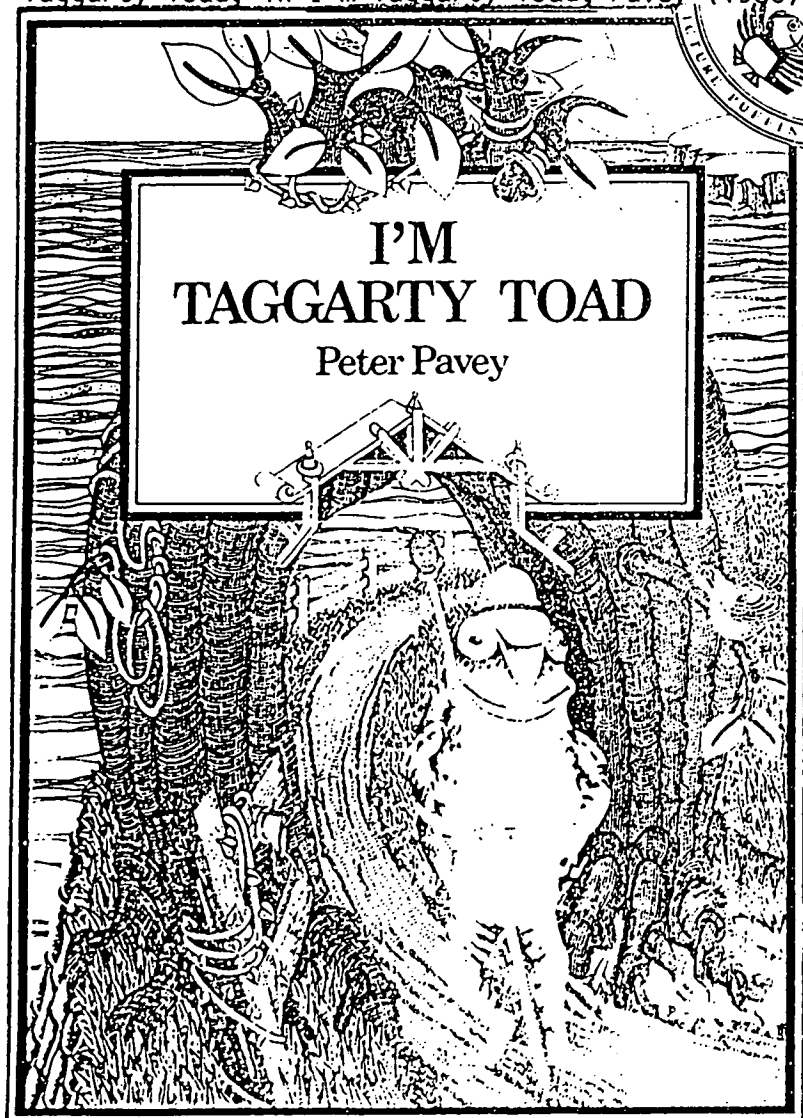
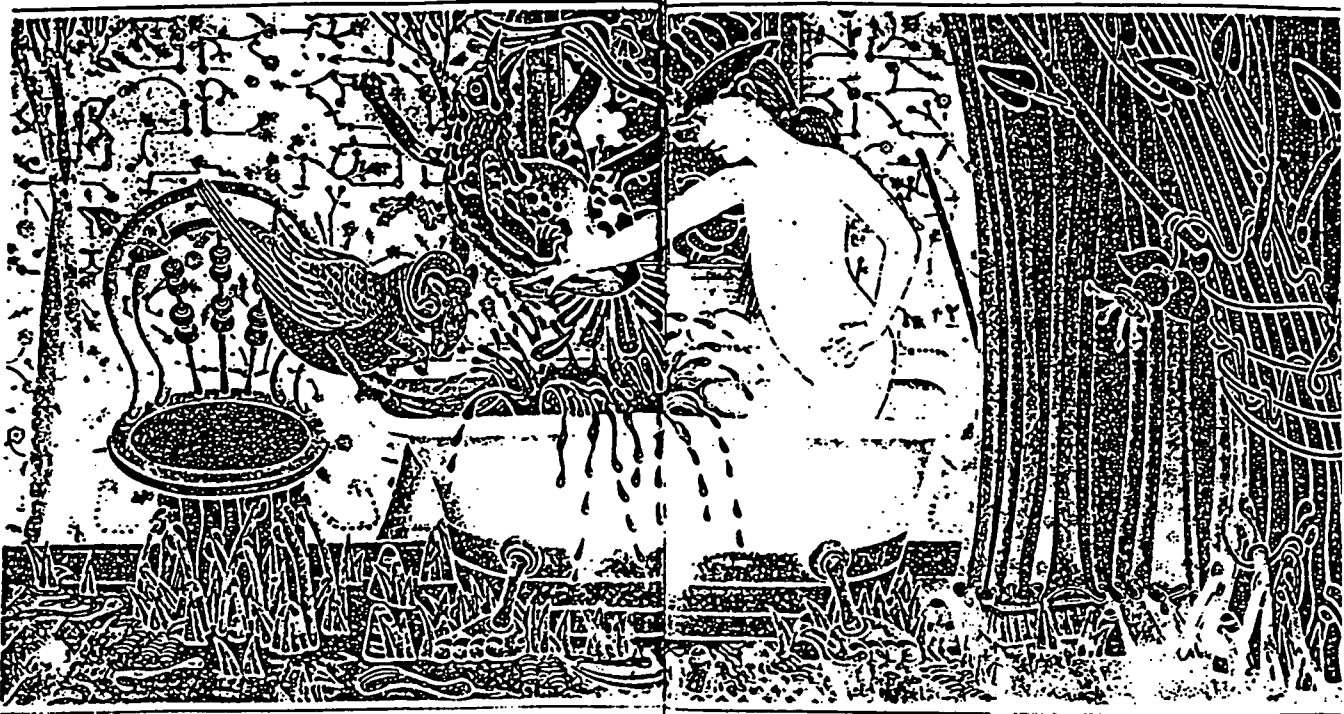




Fig. 69. Pavey depicts the varied expressions in the girl's features in Battles in the Bath, Pavey (1982)



'Be quiet,' I say,  
'or else...'

But they just ignore me.

# NOTES

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2. from Warnock, G.J. (ed.) The Principles of Human Knowledge (1710), Glasgow : Fontana, 1979, pp. 26, 58.
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8. Brooks, R. "John Brown", Reading Time, No. 68, July 1978, p. 6.
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11. Ingpen, R. The Unchosen Land, Rigby Opal Books, 1981, p. 5.
12. Ibid., p. 43.
13. Ibid., p. 43.
14. Pavey, P. "Inventiveness in Illustration", in Stodart, E. op. cit., p. 223.
15. Ibid., p. 224.
16. Ibid., p. 224.

## CONCLUSION

In this study I have attempted to show that accompanying the development of book production and printing techniques in this country, there has been a concurrent development in fantasy illustration in Australian children's literature.

This development has gone through many phases. The fairytale with a European influence and anthromorphised Australian bush creatures dominated the pre-World War II period. The period I have highlighted in this study, that of post-World War II to the 1983 Australian Book Awards, has seen a development in the way illustrators have dealt with Aboriginal mythology; in creating characters and settings for an identifiable "Australian" myth strongly influenced by the Aboriginal Dreamtime; through to fantasy illustration of Australian landscape and figures, to a picture book such as John Brown, Rose and the Midnight Cat which rides the shadowy territory between fantasy and realism, in a way that reminds one of the March Lords of the past, able to act on both sides of a frontier and knowledgeable about both. These artists have explored the disputed territory between realism and fantasy where, perhaps, the life of the human imagination and powers of interpretation are most vivid.

In this study it was necessary to examine early Australian writing and illustrating in order to appreciate its development. While the white inhabitants of Australia still thought of the British Isles as home, it was difficult in the early days of settlement for them to appreciate their environment, and their changing way of life. Early writing and illustrating for children in Australia was done with imported values. Writers and illustrators tried to justify an Australian way of life to an overseas audience and generally reinforced the popular opinions and attitudes held at the time in Britain. Applying British values and assumptions to an Australian environment just did not work in that they misrepresented a great deal of their Australian setting and character.

Of course, this patronising and sometimes scornful attitude to Australia, and the Aborigines in particular, was regrettably present in many books in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. These attitudes had to change, as people came to think of themselves as Australians and not just migrants living overseas.

Australian writers and illustrators have been preoccupied with Aboriginal mythology since the mid-thirties, and have sought to express the spirit of the land and to explore the connection between early Australians and their environment. Writers and illustrators in the previous decades were preoccupied with the flora and fauna

of Australia and used these to illustrate various aspects of human nature and character type.

This study has attempted to show the development in illustrators' visual presentation of Aborigines and their mythology, from the portrayal of European fairy figures as part of the Aboriginal Dreamtime to representation of Dreamtime landscapes by Aboriginal illustrators, to the surrealistic representation of Aboriginal cultures and landscape by such illustrators as Robert Ingpen, who gave expression to an Australian way of drawing upon this landscape to create an imaginary world.

Tracing the work of the storybook illustrators through to the picture book illustrators studied in this dissertation, has highlighted the improved techniques used in production. Illustrators can now work in an extremely wide range of visual media and styles to present a beautiful picture book for children. It has taken such illustrators as Annette MacArthur-Onslow, Ron Brooks, Peter Pavey, and Robert Ingpen to contribute to a revolution in the whole field of illustrating for children in this country. They have produced books for children from an Australian viewpoint, and with an Australian audience in mind. Their work provides an example of Australians who, although aware of styles around the world, are able to develop individual styles that suit their Australian audience; styles which are appropriate to, and help realise the increasingly self-aware

Australian culture in which contemporary child-readers are growing up. They also show an artistic confidence and competence which respects the child's intelligent and growing interest in the world. Their work provides the child with attractive opportunities for aesthetic appreciation, the perception of various art styles, and, a variety of ways of imaginatively engaging with books. The works also encourage child readers in extending their powers of reflective thought and keep their intellect and imagination awake. These works provide models for adults and children to share in the artist's imagination operating in the illustrated book.

This study has tried to show that the most successful children's books have achieved an harmonious relationship between text and visual imagery. The advent of the picture book has placed new and extra demands on the criteria or means of assessing the nature and quality of children's illustrated books. The analyses of the theatrical and artistic codes have been used in this dissertation, to focus and sustain the reader's attention on interpreting visual clues given by the illustrator to make greater meaning and derive enjoyment from the story. Children are challenged through these codings and styles, to notice and think and make sense of the world.

This study has highlighted the effect of the author's and illustrator's changing view of childhood and child-readership. The author and illustrator of the pre-World War II period has a "coyness" in dealing with childhood whereas the focal period in this study has shown a changing attitude through such books as Robert Ingpen's The Unchosen Land or Ron Brooks' John Brown, Rose and the Midnight Cat. These books show the powerful affect on the reader of fantasy as a method of approaching and evaluating the real world. These fantasy works cited, provide an opportunity for the growing sophistication of the reader's perception and interpretation of the world and presume greater powers of the child reader in interpreting and reflecting on the story context.

This study has tried to show that there has been a development in children's books from illustration as mere decoration in most illustrated storybooks, to the story realised almost completely through the illustrations. The picture book illustrators exploit the technical developments for reproducing shape, line and colour, and they accept the role of the illustrator is to tell a major part of the work or the story.

The period under consideration in this dissertation, has witnessed a substantial outpouring of fantasy works. For the illustrators studied, "fantasy", as a genre to engender and sustain the imagination, has

provided the most satisfying mode of expressing their ideas about contemporary values. There has been a development in the evocation and portrayal of Secondary Worlds.

Illustrators have had to learn to create plausible, coherent worlds which obey consistent laws. In this way, they respect the reader's intelligent attention.

In Australian fantasy works, the boundaries between the Primary and Secondary World have not been sharply defined. By and large, Australian writers and illustrators have not created "full-blown" Secondary Worlds of the kind one associates with Tolkien or Le Guin, although, Patricia Wrightson, Robert Ingpen, Peter Pavey and the Aboriginal writers and illustrators have made longer forays in the Secondary World than most others. Only Patricia Wrightson and Robert Ingpen come close to launching a "white" mythic creature within the Aboriginal mythic landscape, thus developing the possibility of an "all-Australian" myth completely native in this continent.

It might be argued, of course, that Aboriginal artists are not producing Secondary Worlds at all, but depict their unique interpretation of their relationship with the land. But for other Australians, the Aboriginals' work operates as a Secondary World of the imagination and provides a new set of lenses with which to view the actual world we all share.



If this is so, then it reminds us of the difficulties of separating Primary and Secondary Worlds. It helps us appreciate too, the value of exploring the boundaries, which<sup>is</sup> what this study claims is common to Australian artists in the genre of fantasy.

I believe that through stories and illustrations, children grow in their understanding of themselves and their relationships within society. They learn a great deal about the world and the ways we can interpret it through its people, animals, objects and events. Fantasy literature and illustration encourages children to play in the imagination with different ways of interpreting, depicting and understanding. It gives them new perspectives on their world and their imaginative thinking. It allows them to explore the shifting boundaries between realism and fantasy and to realise the limits of convention; to find the joy and value of considering different perspectives. As a teacher, I too, value this combination of intellect and pleasure that children may gain through reading and sharing fantasy and its illustrations.

<i>Theatrical subcodes</i>	<i>Cultural codes</i>	<i>Dramatic subcodes</i>
Conventions governing gesture, movement, expression	↔ General kinesic codes	↔ Rules for interpretation of movement in terms of character, etc.
Spatial conventions (regarding playhouse, set, configurations of bodies, etc.)	↔ Proxemic codes	↔ Constraints on reading of spatial arrangements in terms of inter-relationships, dramatic space, etc.
Rules for theatrical costume and its connotations	↔ Vestimentary codes	↔ Rules for interpreting costume in terms of status, character, etc.
Make-up conventions	↔ Cosmetic codes	↔ Conventions relating make-up to dramatic types, etc.
Scenic subcodes	↔ Pictorial codes	↔ Constraints on the construction of the dramatic scene
Restrictions on musical accompaniment, interludes, etc.	↔ Musical codes	↔ Norms regulating the inference of dramatic information from 'significant' music, etc.
Stage and playhouse norms, etc.	↔ Architectural codes etc.	↔ Stage and playhouse as sources of dramatic information, etc.

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<i>Theatrical subcodes</i>	<i>Cultural codes</i>	<i>Dramatic subcodes</i>
[Decoding of performance on basis of constitutive rules]	↔ Syntactic/semantic/phonological constitutive rules	↔ [Interpretation of drama on basis of constitutive rules]
Conventions governing modes of performer-audience address (in theatrical context)	↔ Pragmatic rules (conversation and contextual rules, etc.)	↔ Conventions relating to the interpretation of interpersonal communication (in dramatic context)
Rules of <i>pronuntiatio</i> (delivery)	↔ Rhetorical	↔ Dramatic rhetorical and stylistic conventions (decorum, figural modes, etc.)
Overcoding of voice projection, articulation, intonation, etc.	↔ Paralinguistic	↔ Paralinguistic constraints on character interpretation, etc.
Influence of 'local' or 'regional' factors on performance	↔ Dialectal	↔ Geographical and class constraints on characterization
Actors' imposition of personal traits in delivery, etc.	↔ Idiolectal etc.	↔ Syntactic, rhetorical and personal idiosyncrasies of characters

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	<i>Theatrical subcodes</i>	<i>Cultural codes</i>	<i>Dramatic subcodes</i>
I N T E R T E X T U A L	Expectations deriving from knowledge of other performances	↔ Influence of experience of other aesthetic texts	↔ Expectations deriving from experience of other dramatic texts
	Conventional performance types ('farce', 'Expressionism', etc.)	↔ Cultural typologies	↔ Conventional dramatic genre rules
S T R U C T U R A L	Textual rules governing the semantic integration of different messages and the global syntactic order of the performance	↔ General textual competence: recognition of texts as semantically and syntactically coherent structures	↔ Textual rules regulating the referential coherence of the dramatic text and its overall semantic, syntactic and rhetorical structure
P R E S E N T A T I O N A L	Illusionistic mimetic principles 'authenticating' the representation	↔ Standards of realism, verisimilitude, conception of the real	↔ 'Authenticating' conventions constraining dramatic action as 'real'
	Conventions of direct address, metatheatrical reference, etc., breaking the mimetic illusion	↔ 'Bracketing-off' rules: ability to accept the factitious in aesthetic texts	↔ 'Rhetorical' conventions regarding the formal presentation of drama (prologues, epilogues, asides and other 'artificial' forms)

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	<i>Theatrical subcodes</i>	<i>Cultural codes</i>	<i>Dramatic subcodes</i>
E P I S T E M I C	Theatrical frame (definition of the theatrical situation as such)	↔ Episteme (conceptual organization of world)	↔ Dramatic frame (construction of the 'possible world' of the drama as such)
	Definition of performance elements as such	↔ Encyclopedia (ensemble of points of reference, items of knowledge)	↔ Construction of dramatic 'universe of discourse' (ensemble of referents)
A E S T H E T I C	Preferences for and conventions regarding signal-information	↔ Aesthetic principles	↔ Expectations concerning kinds and ordering of dramatic information
	Preferences regarding performance structure, acting modes, etc.		↔ Preferences regarding dramatic structure, necessity, etc., in dramatic worlds
L O G I C A L	Constraints on the logic of representation, temporal ordering of performance, etc.	↔ General principles of cause and effect, necessity and possibility, etc.	↔ Conventions regarding causation, action structure, necessity, etc., in dramatic worlds

THEATRICAL COMMUNICATION 61

	<i>Theatrical subcodes</i>	<i>Cultural codes</i>	<i>Dramatic subcodes</i>
B E H E A T R I C I A L	Ethical norms on the performer-spectator relationships, on the 'permissive', etc.	General ethical standards	Ethical constraints on the judgement of character, expectations regarding 'hero' and 'villain', etc., and on reading of play's standpoint
	Histrionic over-coding (characteristic 'theatrical' modes of comportment)	Behavioural codes	Stereotypes, 'comic' and 'tragic' behavioural rules, etc.
	Social and economic influences on the theatrical transaction (prices, condition and location of theatre, prestige of actors and company, etc.)	Socio-economic order	Rules governing social hierarchy of characters and their relations (e.g. in Elizabethan tragedy)
	Ideological preferences for certain kinds of performance, theatre, etc.	Political principles	Constraints on interpretation of power relations, on overall decoding of textual meanings, etc.
P O S T D R A M A T I C	Attribution of psychological motivation to director, actors, etc.	Psychological and psychoanalytic decoding principles	Hermeneutics of the 'psychology' of dramatis persona (and author)

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	<i>Theatrical subcodes</i>	<i>Cultural codes</i>	<i>Dramatic subcodes</i>
H I S T O R I C A L	Awareness of traditional performance modes, heritage of ('quotable') theatrical history	Knowledge of historical events, notions regarding period characteristics, received 'portraits' of historical figures, etc.	Allowance for historical differences in worlds, events, customs, language, character, contemporary references, etc.

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