

Jarmila Račková

Introduction

This year's jubilee 30th Biennial of Illustrations again enabled the artists from all over the world to get to know one another on the basis of their best works and present the viewers and publishers their two year activities and achievements in the area of children's illustrated book in a variety of its styles. As well as in the past, these days perhaps still more strikingly, the Biennial has become a platform of theoretical reflection on the conditions of illustration in the world, on its significance and perspectives. The broadly conceived theme "Illustrator in His Relationship to the Today's Conditions of Life" was ample enough to provide room for illustrators of the most varied genres to consider on the contexts this traditional art expression finds itself in our hectic age of electronic media. Incessant information attack and unheard of conciseness of the new data, which many a time wrench out from our control and understanding, inexorably influence our way of life.

Considerations on the influence of the art of illustration on emotional education and its aesthetic and extra-aesthetic aspects, voiced at this platform at the end of the sixties, in thirty years changed into more or less clearly expressed worries about the future of illustration, into considerations on the influence of violence on the children's emotional world, on commercialization of book production, many a time suppressing the form of book as that of an artefact, cherished so much by bibliophiles. The age of globalization, the age of electronic me-

dia and information explosion changed the way of our life, its content and above all its speed. Naturally this influenced the book production process and origination of book illustration many time also positively. It is up to the book creators to search in the civilization attributes of our age rather partners speeding up materialization, shortening the road from creative idea to child reader, than rivals devastating children's emotional lives.

Before entering the third millenium we have to face many questions and still more tasks. BIB is one of the rare non-commercial events of its kind and enables the experts to forget about the market success of books and point at the artistically exclusive illustrations sooner than these are discovered and made good use of by business. BIB's task is so significant because it is just the illustration of our children's books which remains in our memories of childhood, which is our first aesthetic experience forming our future artistic sensitiveness. It is a contribution to activation, materialization of artistic values in a very broad context and publicity, it extends our horizon and authentic view of the artistic prism of illustrators from remote countries of this planet, it leads to the idea of mutual understanding, to tolerance of cultures and thus to their mutual spiritual enrichment. This is the meaning of our meetings without limitations of time, of our dialogue on illustration which has been going on for three decades and will continue, I hope, also in next millenium.

Eva Šefčáková

BIB 1967–1997

This year's symposium is specially devoted to the illustrator and his position under new conditions. Please allow me to make, at the first sight, a small digression. As the Biennial is just thirty years old, I would like to turn back and have a look at its beginnings and recapitulate its original situation. We must mainly have in mind the conditions of our visual arts in those days, because at that moment belles lettres and children's book illustration occupied a specific position. In Slovak arts the beginning of the fifties was the period of official implementation of socialist realism, which liquidated imagination and limited the boundaries of creative activity to dilettante pseudorealistic, the most illusive building enthusiasm or war and work heroism. Exhibition halls were filled with pictures of soldiers or ploughed fields, statues of official representatives or work heroes. The year 1957, marked by the revolt of the young artists' generation, which declared a return to its own artistic problems – to composition and colour, to the right for inventiveness and fantasy – was the year of selfrealization for talented individuals who gradually freed themselves from the grip of the system's censorship, wasting an enormous lot of energy in the process.

The imported Soviet system of ideological pressure did not consider illustration of belles lettres and children's literature, perhaps owing to its close connection with book and graphic expression

in general and understood as applied decorative art, to be a sufficiently representative and lasting testimony to the period, and consequently not the principal carrier of ideological diversion. That is why this sort of art could continually draw on traditional values from before the year 1948. It is not by chance that just at the beginning of the fifties several significant Slovak artists preferred illustration to free creative activity and focused particularly on this art discipline (Ludovít Fulla after 1952).

However, the year 1952 means in the history of Slovak art graphic art in particular also a principal quantitative and mainly qualitative turning point. The Department of Free and Illustrative Graphic Art at the Academy of Visual Arts in Bratislava was established under a lucky star. Vincent Hložník, one of the most remarkable and universally talented personalities of modern art, became its spiritual father and Professor. Thanks to his so-far unimprovable ability to sense talent in the applicants and the intense cultural influence and spiritual freedom he introduced in his relation to the students, such a great number of carefully and universally trained graphic artists and illustrators entered life, which was an unprecedented phenomenon in Slovak art. Several of them were awarded prizes in international, mainly German and Italian, graphic competitions while they were still students at the Academy. Vincent

Hložník, winner of the International Book-Exhibition silver medal in Leipzig in 1959, Dušan Šulc, the Academy's typographer and several similarly appreciated and awarded graduates from his school were responsible for the high rate of Slovak and Czech illustrated books in international contests and convinced Ján Princ, then Director of the Centre of Book Culture and me, that to organise a similar display of illustrations of high standard would be relatively easy and extremely useful for the public, experts publishers and artists, as there were so many good illustrators. The school's spokesmen were Albín Brunovský and Miroslav Cipár together with the editors of *Mladé letá* (Young Years) publishers Ladislav Nesselman and Ján Poliak. The Centre was to be the organiser and the Graphic Art Department in the Slovak National Gallery the expert adviser. Everything happened, only it was a little complicated.

The Biennial had its general rehearsal at the Children's Illustrations state exhibition in the year 1965. Though there was only a short time for its installation and for a collection of illustrations plus for a book to be published in the previous three years, 36 artists participated in the event. The comparison of original illustrations with a ready printed book was often very unfavourable for polygraphic works and publishers gradually grew accustomed to the fact that displays of illustrations organised in such a way were also prestige presentations of their work.

However, we must not forget that the Biennial was born in the favourable conditions of socialism with a human face, that the establishment did not view making contacts abroad as the betrayal of ideas and foreign partners stopped experiencing the feeling that they were entering a territory where „there were lions“. The Slovak Centre of Book Culture was the technical organiser of the event and closely cooperated with the Czechoslovak Committee for Cooperation with UNESCO, which provided the addresses of the members of

international non-governmental organisations engaged in the field of arts. The fact itself that practically all national representatives of the International Board on Books for Young People, many members of the Association International des Critiques d'Art from Europe and several artists addressed by correspondence, accepted membership of the International Committee of the BIB in the autumn 1966, meant that the BIB '67 would be a display on a Republic scale only and with modest international participation.

Moreover, in the Slovak National Gallery we compiled a directory of illustrators, art and literary historians, academies of art and personalities specializing in book art. We imagined that the periodically repeated international exhibition did not have to be only a stage for merciless competition, but could if well documented, bring valuable and historical art material for the study of children's illustrations. It was not probable that we would have enough money to purchase a greater number of original illustrations, but the final result of the illustrators' activity – the printed book – was to remain in Bratislava, according to the Statute of the BIB as the organiser. As in the first two Biennials over 1000 books were gathered, today Bibiana must have a very numerous and extremely valuable library for expert research. We supposed, and it seems that we were right, that Bratislava could become the object of researchers' interest and we were pleased that besides the IBBY representatives and pedagogues, there were also such prominent personalities of art history as Oto Bihalji-Merin, or Horst Kunze, the author of comprehensive history of German illustration (*Geschichte der Buchillustration in Deutschland. Das 15. Jahrhundert. I.-II.*, Leipzig 1975; *Geschichte der Buchillustration in Deutschland. Das 16. und 17. Jahrhundert I.-II.*, Frankfurt am Main – Leipzig 1993) and Hans Halbey, art and illustration historian. In accordance with its motto – the pledges of UNESCO's Charter of Children's Right – “The Influence of the Art of Illustration on

Emotional Education” this was the theme of the first symposium. The second symposium was prepared with the aim of defining illustration from several aspects and had an open theme – “Illustration as a Category of Artistic Expression – (Problems of Its Evaluation – Contacts with Current Tendencies in the World Arts – Non-Traditional Forms of Illustration – The Specific Character of Children’s Illustration – Contemporary Art and Children’s Imagination). The Share of Aesthetic and Extra-Aesthetic Aspects in Children’s Book Illustration was the theme of the symposium in 1973. Many of these partial themes were eventually developed at later symposia. The symposium in 1971 brought an essential methodological change. Its participants accepted our suggestion in which we asked them to produce surveys of illustration history since 1945 in their countries, and in such a way to prepare a joint international book of several volumes devoted to the latest illustration history. On April 25th 1974, when I had to leave my job for political reasons, the manuscript of the book had 311 pages of text and a 169 picture appendix. I am sorry that this project has never been realized.

No one of us in the Slovak National Gallery, whose director accepted the duty to provide for expert assistance for the Biennial, and particularly those of us in the graphic collection, which was supposed to provide that assistance in practice, supposed that about 300 artists from 25 countries would participate in the event in 1967 and that we would have to catalogue and edit over 3200 original works in a very short time. Several of us in the Gallery spent days and weeks writing letters, cataloguing and telephoning. Athletes must experience similar tension before a competition. It seems that we managed to cope with this marathon in the first three Biennials quite well: of course we should be grateful for this to our colleagues and cooperators of those days. We still meet some of them, e.g. Mgr. Ludmila Droppová, co-organiser of the first symposium. But there are

more of those we no longer meet. Eva Ďurdiaková, Eduard Andráš and Ján Farkaš did not attend to our jubilee. Professor JUDr. Adolf Hoffmeister, the permanent Czechoslovak delegate at UNESCO, whom we succeeded in talking into becoming a member of the international jury is no longer among us. On August 15th he would have lived 95 years († 24. 7. 1973). In the first two events his personality changed the work of the jury from a competition of the representatives of individual art opinions into a tolerant discussion conducted with clear view and charm, which consequently became a significant social event. In 1971 we could not invite him for political reasons. Neither did his successor, Professor Albín Brunovský, attend our anniversary.

In spite of the fact that we started the Biennial with unsettled relations between the principal organiser and the expert adviser, or between the publishers and printing offices, its main objective was clear from the very beginning: to concentrate attention on illustration as a highly artistic discipline, corresponding with other sorts of cultivated, topical, artistic and other media activity. The situation which led the most significant personalities among artists to the family of illustrators in our country spoiled us a little, and strengthened our naive idea that we would raise readers of well illustrated books into people with an urgent need to penetrate the mysteries expressed artistically. We did not take seriously enough the voices of mostly West European experts already at the first symposium (Horst Künemann, BIB 67/69 Miscellany, Bratislava 1972, pp.55-58) who pointed out the shady side of our “utopia”: that the book is a product, that there are floods of trivial banalities in the publications of market value, and that the child is not apriori endowed with a “safe instinct for beauty and harmony”. Neither is the book the only or primary medium providing spiritual nutrition to children in our country. Its position has been annexed by films and television stories. At present children’s attention is captiva-

ted by computer virtual reality with more or less aggressive adventure games. We are sorry to summarize that, contrary to the expectations of thirty years ago, the so-called "genuine books" nicknamed by Horst Künemann as didactic illustrated encyclopaedias, aimed at the development of children's intellects, have not won over our children. In them it is their parents who rather find understanding. Children and the young have not given up their "mythical magic" in post modern society either, but today, also in our country, this is determined by the street, market and profit. The open borders also bring, apart from the intoxicating feeling of freedom, numerous risks. The production of printed material, toys and consumer goods is focused directly on children. Even the most demanding parent cannot avoid the influx of stickers, prints and chewing gum wrappers with their monstrous pictures, or the longings for not very sophisticated toys. Imported books in the seventies we sneered at, when art in our country was marked by the crisis of "profound political normalization", we laughed a little maliciously, that also in a free society a sort of polished "social realism" could be produced, now filling the counters of street book-stalls, even the shops of the so-called "stone publishing houses". Artistically demanding illustration was pushed aside by the style of intensely colourful American retouched art, produced in a dilettante way, which came from commercial brochures and penetrated even classical fairy tales because of its provocative psychedelic hues. Compared with this aggressively large scale of monotonous artistic products of first plane illustration, supported by "soap-opera"-like serial stories, reality looks rather drab. I am not sure whether particularly smaller children do not yield more easily to hallucinogenic dealers also because of their longing to make their housing estate world more similar to the pictures of those printed materials. One of our most remarkable book publishers, poet Daniel Hevier, speaks of literary trash as of cancer cells which after

some time start to consume themselves, and therefore will not persist on the bookshop counters. "All those ephemeral bestsellers (which are, by the way, published in decreasingly small numbers) paradoxically, but as a rule, liquidate their hosts, who believed in this sort of production... (SME plus 1997, No. 11, p. 5). As far as illustration, children's illustration in particular, is concerned I am afraid, we cannot expect such an unambiguously optimistic prognosis without the assistance of enlightened publishers who would commission the present day artistically-mature illustrators and perhaps leave them some room for experimentation. At the exhibitions of author's books, bibliophilic and graphic works we can encounter outstanding works by an extensive circle of artists, for whom it is worth the effort to create a unique, original, book, because they believe that even in our multimedial days the book as a chamber Gesamtkunstwerk had the right for life now, and let us also hope in the future. Perhaps I am returning again to our primary "utopian" idea, but I think that time has come to confront on the bookshop counters readers with the possibility of choice and to add a sufficient number of books in which a carefully edited good text will be adequately complemented by contemporary carefully selected artistically demanding and excellently printed pictures. This artistic expression, according to the wish of Daniel Hevier (Miscellany of the International Symposium BIB'95, Bratislava 1996, p. 5), will be able to create for the child a safe, intimate place for inventiveness and personality growth. In this connection I must not avoid mentioning the publishing house "Modrý Peter" (Blue Peter) in Levoča and to pay homage to it, for in the competition for the most beautiful book in Slovakia 1966, they proved that this concept was realistic. The BIB is an opportunity for traditional meeting of artists with all publishers who have not abandoned the dream of the future of beautiful books. Bibiana, whose exhibitions and events have presented to our public

many stimulating artistic experiments, can be a reliable guarantor of quality in the selection of

illustrators. It would be a pity not to take advantage of this.

Klaus Doderer

Variants of Fairy Tale Modernization by Means of Illustration

**Two examples: "The Municipal Musicians from Bremen"
with illustrations by Klaus Ensikat and "The Brave Tin Soldier"
with illustrations by Jörg Müller.**

Within the scope of the symposium's theme "The Illustrator in His Relationship to Today's Conditions of Life" – I would like to raise the question as to what the chances are of such an interpretation of fairy tale texts and themes which would encompass the range of problems in today's world.

Two fairy tales through which I would like to demonstrate various illustration possibilities are "The Municipal Musicians from Bremen" in the form as we know it from the Grimm brothers' tales of 1819 and "The Brave Tin Soldier" presented by Hans Christian Andersen originating in Danish folk tales.

The illustrators who chose these old texts are today mature, creative personalities. The first of them, Klaus Ensikat, born in Berlin in the year 1937, was awarded the Grand Prix at the BIB'79 in Bratislava, Slovakia and the Hans Christian Andersen Medal in Groningen (the Netherlands) in 1996. The other artist, Jörg Müller, born in Lausanne in 1942, has also been given awards for his works several times. Apart from other prizes he was awarded an Honourable Mention at the BIB 1973, the Prize for Illustrations of Literature for the Young in Germany in 1974 and the Hans Christian Andersen Medal in 1994.

Both artists differ principally from each other, not only in their style, but in their approach to the fairy tale theme as well. While Klaus Ensikat by his

subtle lines and reserved colour scale evokes the atmosphere of the ancient environment, in such a way getting closer to the mood of the Grimm brothers' text, literally encompassed in the book, Jörg Müller gets away from the text. He expresses himself particularly by pictures and brings us a modern version of the fairy tale, and working with full colour he sets the mirror to today's world by his realistic, even photorealistic style. I selected four pages from the illustrated book "The Municipal Musicians from Bremen", published by Altberliner Verlag in Berlin in 1994 to present Ensikat's cultivated way of joining the modern way of thinking with the old fairy tale theme. Everywhere, the details in the illustrations become alive – objects, the human clothes of the animal characters and buildings, belonging to the dilapidated, wonderful and, in spite of that, harmonious world.

(Picture No. 1. The Dog and the Donkey in Front of the Glazier's)

In this illustration the dog rests comfortably on the pavement when the excited donkey trips over him. The text comes from the year 1819 as I have already mentioned, and has not been changed. However, Klaus Ensikat draws by means of the signboard placed on the facade our attention to the fact that the glazier's was founded in the year 1897. However, there is also a telephone number, hinting at the fact that this dog and donkey lived in a time when the telephone was used.

(Picture No. 2. An Old Cat at the Fence)

A few pages on, an old toothless cat sits on the fence at the edge of the road in such a way as Grimms' text describes. She could belong to the era of post coaches without any problem. However, she looks at a road sign which indicates that this scene takes place in the era of cars.

(Picture No. 3. A Thief Escaping over the Rails)

In this fairy tale animals, thanks to their solidarity, drove away the thieves from their forest house. In the illustration connected with the text "And the thief ran as fast as he could" we can see a man in a cloak and slippers jumping over the rails. The thieves' house hidden in the deep forest is a fairy tale illusion here. The rails are situated right by the house. The connection by railway and telephone is a current reality in Ensikat's "Municipal Musicians from Bremen."

(Picture No. 4. A Cat a Donkey and a Dog at the Stove)

The final scene Ensikat created as an illustration to the "Municipal Musicians from Bremen" does not lack the atmosphere of ancient times. The donkey, the dog, the cat and the cock sit comfortably in a warm room. A fire is blazing in the fireplace. However, an attentive observer will notice that the group does not sit round the fireplace but round a black box. We can see only its back face. It may as well be a television set. The animals concentrated on it are in the same positions as today's television viewers. There is some beer, their attention is weakened and watching the programme slowly lulls the viewers.

Jörg Müller's illustrated book "The Brave Tin Soldier", published by Sauerländer Verlag (Aarou) in 1996, has quite a different approach to the century and a half old fairy tale. The Swiss artist sets the story about the legless tin soldier whose end is bad, and his love for the ballerina remains unrequited into our days. Jörg Müller does not represent Hans Christian Andersen's text and approaches it rather freely.

(Picture No. 5. Town houses, streets with parked cars)

In this case there is a huge poster on the wall on one of the two pages of the picture book, beside which we can see house fronts and parked cars. In the forefront we can see containers with rubbish. If we look at the picture more carefully we discover the tin soldier and the ballerina, in the form of a Barbie doll, in a bag among other litter.

(Picture No. 6. Town canal vault)

Both toys float under the huge vault of the town canal, surrounded by rats and rubbish. The contrast between the world of dreams and reality is obvious and is stressed by the words on a floating piece of paper wrapping: "The taste of paradise".

(Picture No. 7. A black child with a toy)

The story, told to us by Jörg Müller in form of pictures based on Hans Christian Andersen's text transfers both figures into the environment of a dirty quarter of an African suburb. A black boy, helped by his father, has made a toy from old tins – a small car – and is just putting the tin soldier and the ballerina in it. In the background we can see a white man, a tourist taking a photograph of the scene. Later the white man buys the tin car from the boy.

(Picture No. 8. The museum halls with showcases)

The double page at the end of the book allows the reader to peep into the museum halls. Toys are exhibited there. On the right we can see behind glass, as exhibit No.33, the tin soldier and the Barbie doll in the tin car which once belonged to the black boy. A spiritless empty atmosphere prevails. On the right is the museum attendant sitting and dozing off.

If we compare both variants of old fairy tale modernization we arrive at an unambiguous conclusion that their approach to the text is very different.

Klaus Ensikat leads us into the olden days "Once upon a time there was..." and enables us

to recognize by means of a few signs that it is the year 1997. Jörg Müller, on the contrary, sets the impressive story of the tin soldier and his great love into rough reality.

Klaus Ensikat outlines only by means of a few essentials the atmosphere of the modern world and the television age and sticks relatively faithfully to the text. Jörg Müller changes the Andersen story content itself and lets the couple ramble as far as Africa and end, not in a stove, but in a museum.

Klaus Ensikat employs the ancient stories for a few ironical allusions to our days – mainly in the last illustration – which is a caricature of our modern society. Jörg Müller uses Andersen's text to make the social problems of the consumer society more visible. He points at the intrusive behaviour of tourists, the painful chasm between the fates of the rich and the poor, and also the child's joy of the toy he himself made. At the same time he maintains the key message of the fairy tale about the brave tin soldier, who does not find happiness anywhere in the world, not even in a museum. Klaus Ensikat has a hidden talent for the creation of animated cartoons. He is endowed with humour, discretion and the sense of style. He sticks to the philosophy of life conveyed to him by

the Grimm brothers' fairy tales and takes them with a certain discretion to happy ends. However his discretion has the flavour of irony.

Jörg Müller introduces to Hans Christian Andersen's text a sharp socio-critical view of our conditions today. In a picture story about the tin soldier and his dreamt of happiness in the cruelty of the present day world we become witnesses of children's joy in a poor environment and we realize the unbalanced conditions and iniquity which rule the world. However, the message of the Danish fairy tale author about the unfulfilled unearthly love remains untouched.

We have had a chance to see two quite different concepts of modernization of old fairy tale texts. No matter how different are the two approaches, they do not abandon the original text. They are evidence of the fact that the art of illustration is that of interpretation. The charm and supertemporal character of the fairy tale message has remained preserved in both cases, even if owing to several details the fairy tales become somehow closer to us. The fascinating beauty of the unreal story has remained present for all readers in both illustrated books, no matter whether they are quite young or belong to the older generation.

Daniel Hevier

New Problems of Book Treatment and New Strategies in How to Bring Books Closer to the Youngs

The longer I look at the title I have given to my considerations the more I become aware of how inaccurate it is. New problems of book treatment? There are no principally new problems. However, all these are the problems which have been returning to us by a sort of a "time sling" more frequently than comets, I think since the very beginnings of children's books' existence. New strategies in how to bring books closer to the young? I have no recipes up my sleeve. As my qualifications as author, publisher, parent and publicist in this area could and should be of quadruple character, in actual fact I am only four times as helpless and full of questions.

I am more and more convinced that the problems of children's books and those of the adolescents cannot be solved without addressing the problems of literature, culture as such and without understanding Man's global and spiritual position at the end of the millenium.

Giving a name to the general situation is still more complicated because no general, global situation exists. There is always the very concrete and intimate relation of a specific reader to a specific work, a certain author, the relation of a certain author to a certain language or cultural context, specific genre and specific theme.... The threads of these relations are very fragile and almost invisible. Even if the scientific public were willing to deal exactly with the investigation and description

of these intricate facts, their achievements would be probably very misrepresenting. What can be more difficult to grasp than the intimate relation of one man (the author) to another man (the reader) remote from each other geographically and from the aspects of time, generation, experience...?

And so we actually work almost without specific facts, figures, statistics, percentages in a field shrouded in fog which we can see in fantasy films or on mythological novels' book covers. Literary criticism or theory can also be exact to a certain limited extent, beyond which is the realm of intuition, dreaming, longings or premonitions.

I would like to ask you to let me kindly involve you rather in personal experience, intuition and worries during this serious symposium, than in generally accepted but not confirmed and untestable theses.

For example, my inner voice tells me that something very significant and essential is taking place in the heart of children's literature. Very urgent changes and processes, though invisible to the casual eye, take place there. As almost always these breakthroughs are on the one hand encouraging, on the other alarming. For example, children's and young people's relations to reading itself change in a very radical way. When we speak of reading we still mean conventional text reading. But the phenomenon of reading changes turbulently in front of our eyes: it com-

prises reading also signs, marks, symbols, video reading, computer reality, design reading (from cars to fashion trends), reading the signs of one's own identity or adherence to a generation group (hairstyle, clothes, footwear...) reading about non-traditional sports, reading the graffiti culture, reading commercials... we could continue in this enumeration which is considerably fragmentary, because it embraces even such specific sorts of reading as that of tattoo symbols or extreme piercing. This visual reality enters the range of view of children and young people as a very strong stimulus, it has its aesthetic qualities for them, and can be for them an equal, if not even stronger, emotional experience we wanted to reserve for art, in the conventional meaning of the word, until recently.

However, it seems as if our children have acquired a different ability to read reality and this is very interesting, even disquieting, for us, the generation of parents, teachers, authors, publishers. Perhaps this is the objective sign of cultural decline, or only another quality of visual perception. Perhaps this is something even futurologically shocking. I believe that this so far hazy anticipation could also be measured physiologically or psychologically in the future, but in the time being I would word it in this way: something in our children and in the children of their children prepares them for "reading" the reality of the new millenium. New physiologic sight if already being created in these generations. A sight which might perhaps have other properties, other qualities, other vision. In some respects it will be stunted, in others it will develop in an overwhelming way. Already today, primary school teachers, let us say, could tell us much about how the children of today are able or unable to read a conventional text composed of letters, how and how much they are able to perceive, remember from it... Already now, we parents of today could say a lot about our children's ability to read other sorts of reality I have spoken of before.

I am not a prognostician, but I think that there also exists such an alternative of mankind's development, in which the conventional, or if you wish classic, reading of a text will be of minority character, exclusive, archaic... I need not stress, that also for me personally, as for a man representing classic culture and cultural character of the old century, such a vision would make me sad, and this would not be because of nostalgia and sentimentality.

Everybody who visits a book fair these days, or skims over the pages of a catalogue from any publisher in the world, can see how these tendencies sometimes comically or desperately manifest themselves both in the content and appearance of contemporary books. Outwardly this is presented as new trends in the books for children and the young, inwardly it is the expression of the fact, that we, the adults, have lost the feeling of security in face of the new reality arriving with the new generations.

I do not think that this new face of reality is an apocalyptic variant we learn about in bad sci-fi films. Just the opposite, the megatrends indicate that the future millenium will be much more friendly to spirituality and culture than our tired and worn out century. I tend to see in the new signs of reality rather a challenge and chance to deepen the creativity, imagination, and fantasy of us, the creators, to intensify the relationship between the adults and children, the unanticipated possibilities of literature to share in the creation of new civilization, new mankind.

These new chances have already started occurring and they will be occurring at an always greater speed, not only in the form of new offers of new reality visualization, but mainly as inner impulses. I am convinced that we, the today's authors, illustrators, designers, editors, publishers, psychologists and parents, are far from having invested in these changes as much creativity, commitment, or if you wish our hearts, as we should and as our children and the young adults want us to.

It is not our children who fail and it is not their development which is disquieting. So far we, the adults, have been failing. If we speak of books and in connection with them about reading – our children have not stopped reading. It is us in particular who have resigned from reading. We should say it adequately aloud: it is not the reader, but the adult creator, author, illustrator who dies out. They are not able to react to the inner needs of the child of today, they do not understand the needs of childhood and adolescence of today, it is them who often cannot find a natural way of communication with new generations. Naturally, they do not die out literally, their status does not expire, but their credit and authority do, or in the best case are weakened... Many of us authors prefer to make an alliance with other adults (parent – teacher – librarian – bookseller) in order to assure one another of the fact that we know best what is beneficial for our children, how to take up the new language, new imagination and new view of our children's world. Or the opposite many of us can cipher only the outer, aggressive signs of our children's reality and then misuse them emblematically, try to meet the most trivial need and lower the taste of children and adolescents.

What should the new strategies of bringing books closer to children and young adults be like? Finally it is not in the intellectual capacity of a single man to provide a universal instruction to respectfully transfer something as archaic as the book into the next millenium.

However, I have the feeling that we should return to literature, i.e. also to literature for children and the young, its original power, authority, credibility, trustfulness, its magic and emotional values and make its inner quality more profound. The current expansion of books for children and the young is evidently no longer tenable. The number of issues, the number of individual titles, of course the number of publishers, illustrators and authors will decrease... Some will find other

areas of activity, some will have to vigorously defend their author's licence.

If the literature of the next millenium also accepts all the stimuli of new technologies and new ways of communication, it will surely return to its cave period, when it was spread only orally and was visualized on the listeners' inner scene. Literature for children and the young will have to start dealing with mankind's basic problems. Who are we? Where are we from? Where are we going? It will have to give name to fear, hope, dreaming again and particularly to find again its inner dynamism of the basic struggle between Good and Evil.

As we are at the Biennial of Illustration, I have an anticipation that the external form of literature – the book – will also have to undergo essential changes. The episode which happened at one Art Academy when a graduate wanted to hand in his diploma work on a diskette, tremendously upsetting and exasperating his older colleagues and professors, is symptomatic from this point of view and fortells turbulent changes in book content visualization. Contemporary art illustration will also have to defend its status, it will have to find a balance between easily readable sign and artistic stylization. I suppose that illustration copying, a kitsch-like pseudorealistic world, as well as highly artistic, non-addressive mannerist illustration, will be less and less usable and will have to look for new markets elsewhere.

Books for children and the young will have to build a new relation to their recipients, based on mutual respect for the author's and illustrator's possibilities and the needs of the addressee. I am an optimist in this respect. I am convinced that this relationship will be strengthened. It will have to be strengthened, because otherwise there would be only one chance – that of extinction, fall, disintegration...

The book, the book of the next millenium, will have to free itself from market relations and dependence. Qualified publishers and editors, and

also e. g. psychologists, will acquire much greater competence than distributors and booksellers, whose dictatorship will be weakened in book production.

In spite of the fact that I am trying to infect you with my visionary ideas, I suppose that we shall have to experience a terrible fall almost to the bottom, in order to purify the values, so that the liberated book is able to return to its original power. Perhaps we can almost expect the extinction of reader in order to witness its renaissance.

These real alternatives are horrifying only until we understand them as a challenge and chance to share in the renewal of literature and the book. And this is not only an exciting process but also wonderful and dignified creative work.

New technologies will come hand in hand with our civilisation's progress. New spirituality, called culture, will have to be gained in a very hard way from all the best inside us. I think that we should be grateful for this chance.

Igor Imro

DTP and Children's Books

(Problems of children's books typographic processing by computer)

I am going to use a generally known statement, we could say a phrase, as an introduction: "Technological development and its constant progress infringes all spheres of our lives." I add to this a statement to make it more precise: that this also afflicts culture, including the area of book production. To put it still more precisely: computer technology (apart from all other spheres) strikingly influenced first the production and then also creation of children's books and booklets. Each novelty (which in this case is no longer a novelty) has its pluses and minuses. These are the principal parts of my paper, based on two basic principles.

From the aspect of creation, computer technology – i. e. the computer – is the last stage of the pencil.

Books – including children's books are three dimensional objects.

I am going to try and explain you both principles before I devote myself to positive and negative contributions of book processing by computer technology.

The first principle – the comparison of computer technology with the pencil – might look absurd, but only until we realize that the idea is the essence of creativity. This idea has to be recorded. I use the pencil as the symbol of idea recording, owing to its simple and multipurpose character. Pencil records drawings, words, figu-

res. I chose the mentioned order of succession on purpose – if we use it the other way round we arrive at computer technology, which by means of figures, records besides figures themselves also words and drawings. The computer is actually the same means of recording ideas as the pencil. Of course it is much more multisided, and we must realize its advantages which consist mainly in its speed, accuracy, perfection and number of preserved recordings.

The second principle is not directly connected with computer technology. It concerns the book as such, which suffers particularly not only from designers – book arrangers – but from many illustrators as well. The sheet, in most cases the sheet of paper in front of the illustrator or designer, tempts one to a two-dimensional understanding and solution of the problem. However, in this case the arrangement of these two-dimensional sheets one after another is so striking that the book illustrations are excellent, but the design, binding, or cover as a whole does not attract attention. The third dimension is literally missing here, as this, apart from its physical character, represents a sort of inner tension and gradation which can be felt when we skim over the pages of a well-made book. In this case the notion of author means not only the writer, but the illustrator and designer as well. Authors sharing in the creative work of book creation, should be balanced.

In this respect the principle of "three-dimensionality" concerns all books without exception, no matter whether it is a phone book or a children's picture book.

However, book processing by means of computer technology is to be this paper's principal theme. As I have already mentioned while explaining the first principle, the computer's advantages consist in its accuracy, speed, perfection and the amount of processed and stored information. In practice this means a great speeding up of the work process, particularly in preparation and materialization of book production as such. At the same time many activities can be undertaken together which, in its turn, again saves time.

It was not long ago that a children's book manuscript, after it had been included in the publishers' editorial plan, went to the artist so that he could illustrate it. After the book had been illustrated (sometimes fortunately at the same time as the writing) the designer was assigned to produce the book's "prototype", again, with good luck, in cooperation with the illustrator. When the designer laboriously calculated the arrangement of the text, or literally drew it and defined the proportion of illustration reproduction, the book manuscript was sent together with the illustrations to the printing office. Everything depended on the experience of those involved, particularly of the designer as to whether the defined book manuscript (type and size of characters, the width of setting) after having been painted, corresponded to the ideas or to the "prototype".

Limited fonts of characters in individual printing offices or non-uniform composition density in connection with one and the same type of font formed frequently arising problems. Printing offices already supplied the colour prints of the illustrations at that stage. (If everything went well, the book text for the first proof reading.) Of course those had to undergo "proof reading", too (which mainly concerned the *illustrator*). Only then could the book's maquette on the basis of the "prototy-

pe" be made. All such materials, processed in this way were again sent to the printing office. In the printing office they arranged the text and illustrations on the pages and mostly one colour proofs (also called "ozalides" or blue prints – *blaupausen*) were returned to the publishers for proofreading, which if everything went well ended in "imprimatur" – i. e. confirmation of the approval that the book might be printed. In the complicated printing office work the expression "to make up" and "run in" the pages were used, which had been taken over from the period of classical book printing. The seemingly long work description presented is, however, the shortest way of printing books even today. Of course, quite a lot of time is wasted during the before-mentioned activities, mainly when the texts are sent to the printing office, which is not always in the same town as the publishers. Moreover, in most cases the book materials are sent together, whether it is necessary or not. During the production process described, apart from the mentioned creative people (author, illustrator, designer) and the inevitable publishing house background of editors (text, language, artistic and technical ones), book materials go through further processing in the printing office, carried out by the technologist, compositor, photographer, make-up type-setter, lithographer, printer, book binder and finally by the dispatcher.

How does the situation appear when the book is produced by means of computer technology? The author supplies the text in written form and electronic recording. The illustrator uses the written form as a basis for his activity while the electronically recorded texts in the computer can be adapted literary and grammatically. The ready illustrations are transferred by scanning into electronic form, the designer can work simultaneously with both the text and illustrations, with direct visual control. The choice of the type and size of font is instant, colour corrections can be carried out electronically. By means of a printer (often

a colour one) joined to the computer, it is possible to make the imprints of individual pages immediately from which the maquette is then arranged. This maquette should go through all degrees of proofreading and after all the mistakes have been corrected it can be approved and get an "imprimatur". The electronically processed and corrected pages are further processed by a computer controlled special unit and are sent together with the maquette to the printing office. The printing office then has to make the sheet arrangement and from it printing models (lithographic boards) and then print the book. Of course the final book making work remains unchanged.

It follows from the briefly outlined process that considerable time can be saved if the book is processed by computer, from the preparatory work to the book printing itself. Lengthy, multiple exchange of materials between the printing office and the publishers is no longer necessary. Publishers (or publisher) can literally work on the desk from which the name of this activity is also derived "desk top publishing", with the famous abbreviation DTP.

Another, not negligible chance offered by the computer is its direct use in making illustrations. This way of children's book illustration has not been widely spread yet, but it is particularly employed in textbooks. This is also an attestation of the computer's drafting principle. The result, however, depends on the operator's – designer's skill. Even the best "drawing programme" does not mean much here.

Perhaps the greatest advantage from the before-mentioned ones most appreciated by book designers is the direct possibility of adapting the text into the type-setting form. Computer programmes, accessible for DTP, at present contain many types of type – the so called "fonts" – with the possibility of setting the size approximately from four points to as many as 60 picas. At the same time it is possible to check the texts immediately – it means that the type looks the same on

the computer screen as after printing or processing in a special unit. The programmes mentioned moreover contain complete typographic principles of arranging the type setting and are able to immediately correct grammatical mistakes. The higher the number of the programme version is, the more complicated and perfect it is. However, we can say there is a pitfall that several programmes have built for the users. They do not differentiate between scientific literature, economic reports or children's books. Moreover, hand in hand with the higher programme version, we have at our disposal a further selection of programmed typographic arrangements, so that at first sight it seems that these programmes ease the designers' work. Just the opposite is true, many have experienced that. I shall return to this problem.

But let us rather return to the advantages which are far from negligible. Apart from the already-mentioned great choice of typographic or other types, direct scanning is another contribution. Such facilities have been operating for quite a long time in polygraphic corporations. Moreover, they are increasingly accessible financially. Many present relatively cheap scanners are better in many respects than the big polygraphic ones. Their only limitation is format. Currently they operate in A4 format, the more efficient ones in A3 format. It is already taken for granted that they do not differentiate in the model – they scan pictures both from an opaque model as well as from the transparent (slides). An electronically taken picture, in our case an illustration, can be corrected and adjusted in many ways. The possibility of immediate colour correction is perhaps the greatest advantage for the illustrator as well as for the designer. Naturally, in such a case we cannot use the simplest computer equipment; a calibrated monitor inevitably belongs to the scanner. Here I would like to point at some frequent pitfalls encountered by many illustrators, using bright colours. These colours lose their

bright character when classically arranged in the *four colour offset printing*. This is caused by the fact that printing inks do not contain such components which influence the reflective character of light and in such a way also the brightness of colours. Present, more perfect correction programmes give, to a certain extent, the chance to single out part of these colours from the current colour result and by adding one or two other colours achieve the necessary effect in the illustration. This is possible, because the added printing inks have the same properties as those in which the original was painted. The area of correcting the colourfulness of the electronically processed pictures is extremely sensitive and claims expert knowledge and literally a sense of colour from the computer operator.

Most programmes for picture processing are currently equipped with various colour effects, colour transitions, various again pre-programmed colour scales. These complements, however, should be employed more in advertising design and commercial press than in children's books.

In general we can say that the advantages of book processing by computer technology, i. e. by the DTP facility these days can be compared with professional polygraphic equipment. It lags behind the computerized processing, because the DTP work place is much more adaptable with regard to the publishing house or publisher. The adaptability consists mainly in the fact that it is not necessary to observe the procedures strictly anchored in the traditional polygraphic system when you start to work on a book. It is possible to vary the entries and influence the time dependence. As an example I shall mention the possibility that the book's text is already run in, the author of the text and the designer agree on the space for illustrations and on their motifs and the illustrator already knows exactly where to put illustrations in the book prepared in such a way. However, an opposite method is also possible. First there are the

illustrations which either create the story themselves, or a text is written for them. The designer determines its approximate extent and the author writes the text. Naturally, the classic method of giving the illustrated text to the designer also offers the chance to set out the text and adapt it in detail to the illustrations, or to place the text with illustrations on the exactly defined scope of the book, without waiting for possible problems arising after the set up text from the printing office is delivered.

However, all the advantages mentioned are true only if the designer has a good harmonious relationship with the computer operator, or he himself is one. I am going to return to the already mentioned pencil. I give you an example – an artist does not know how or cannot use the pencil and gives orders to somebody how to draw. This is an unusual example, but I hope it is fairly objective. The result of such work would almost never correspond with the artist's ideas, but would definitely have the characteristic features of the person who held the pencil in his hand. Exactly the same is true of the cooperation of an artist (illustrator or designer) with the computer operator. And all this is visible in many works.

Quite often we encounter a certain technocratic transmission of pre-programmed and mainly well-proved stencils by which the operator adapts the set up. This is mostly caused by lesser knowledge of typographic norms and in many cases by a certain enchantment with the possibilities of technology and the effort to use it as much as possible. That is why it is necessary for the operator not only to have good command of orders, he has to command the computer to make it do something, but also to have an active command of typographic principles. Not everything can be programmed. I will mention frequent – we could say, regularly repeated – mistakes which have to be avoided particularly in setting up children's books and belles lettres.

Type Selection

It happens that the operator (sometimes also the designer himself) yields to the possibilities of individual programmes, and employs the title type for setting up. In many cases such type is not very legible. The greatest disadvantage of such types is that there are not suitable spaces between the signs – the set up text is not fluent. Moreover a child who can already read has problems in discerning the individual letters, because often they have other, less usual shapes.

Size is not a negligible factor when we select the type. In this case I warn of a shortcoming which is not a novelty in the DTP but has also occurred in photo setting up. Cast typographic types in lino- or mono-compositions when there were various sizes of one type were not mechanically enlarged or reduced – the matrices were prepared specially for each size the type foundry supplied. This is why cast brevier photographically enlarged to 12 points seemed to be bold or more open in comparison with the cast 12 point type. This was the effort to optimize smaller type and make it more readable.

Composition Density

Computer editing programmes, i.e. the programmes, destined for arranging and adapting texts (editing) in most cases take over the customs of classic – the so called “led” – composition. That is why most of them operate apart from basic systems of linear measures (international SI – centimetre and the Anglo-American inch) with typographic measures of Didot's system (pica, point) and American (pica). These quantities are used for setting up the format breadth and height of the composition, distance between the lines, margins or spaces between paragraphs. Apart from this it is possible to set the width of the spaces between words as well as the spaces between letters in most of the editing programmes.

Here the greatest problems arise, as the spaces between individual signs depend on several factors which have to be adjusted individually and in a uniform way in the whole book: A computer programme is basically set in an optimal way; however, this does not mean that this optimal way is suitable for each size or type of type. Usually when the type of letters increases, the spaces between individual types are reduced and vice versa. This improves legibility but in sizes which are used in children's books (approximately from 14 to 24 points) the constant setting of the editing programme (ensuing from 10 to 12 point sizes) does not suffice. As a result we have a text which does not look compact and in spite of the increased size of the type reduces legibility. Setting proper spaces between individual types and words requires a skilled operator, and it is always good to check on experimental prints whether it fulfils the purpose and ideas. I stress that the monitor, though it provides very good visual information, is not able to provide such differentiation as a printing office or a special unit and ignores the fractions of percents which are often decisive. That is why it is sometimes good to test the composition by the special unit which is the most perfect as far as differentiation is concerned.

Text Composition into Block

This is the greatest existing pitfall since composition originated. The type setter – this time operator – must be very careful about the spaces between words and try to situate them by means of word division in lines in such a way that the composition will not make “isles and rivers” – light spaces in the middle of the block composition, which originate in large spaces between words and stand approximately in the same places in several lines above and below. Spaces between words have been used in block composition to adjust both margins, left and right, while the spaces are uniform in each line but different in the

lines underneath since the invention of printing press. This is the most frequent problem, where technology cannot substitute for compositor or designer. This is caused by the pre-programmed word division and the machine mechanism, which usually chooses the first of several possibilities which complies with the conditions given by the programme. The compositor can decide in favour of a partial reduction of spaces between words in a line, if it comes to the worst. The machine has the lowest space value and can only increase it. Such "machine" errors arise if the operator cannot interfere and manually adjust word division, for example, 5 lines before the problem place. Composition on "the flag" has been used now with increasing frequency as a certain way out. In this sort of composition such problems almost do not occur, because the machine adjusts only one – usually the left – margin, and in such a way permanently maintains the set value of spaces between words. Many a time this is the way out of problems. Its pitfalls consist in *unequally long lines and reduced legibility*.

Computer programmes offer one more possibility of composing text into blocks. Apart from changing the size of spaces between words they change also the spaces between individual letters. This is definitely a spectacular way, although more suitable for advertisements, posters or invitations and has nothing to do in children's books in particular.

Type Distortion

Most computer editing systems offer the possibility of distorting the type – by narrowing, extending or leaning. We do not reject these possibilities as they cannot often help the designer, mainly in composing book covers and their opening title pages. However, these possibilities should be used considerably and we should realize that this is a typographic substitute. Typographic types have their characteristic features, which their author, or authors seriously consi-

dered when they engraved them (now constructed). Each creator of typographic type strives for optimal legibility but this advantage of good typographic types disappears owing to their subsequent distortion. That is why I principally do not recommend distortion (narrowing or extending or making italics from normal type) in books, particularly children's book adaptations.

A certain accepted idea of approach to computers features among the already mentioned disadvantages of computer books, including children's book processing. The computer is a machine which substitutes for Man's work. It is perfect that it surpasses all the so far achieved possibilities. It often happens that in many places of work (not only in book publishing) their activities slowed down after the introduction of computers together with all problems connected with them in comparison with manual treatment. This erroneous idea often leads to *discrepancies in computer book-processing*. People think that the computer is a miracle which can do everything in a very short time if we touch the keys or the cursor. Those who have such relation to computer technology had better avoid it.

In conclusion I return to the principles I mentioned at the beginning.

I remind you again of the idea of the principle of three dimensional book. No book – above all a child's is a poster or a leaflet. A book has its third dimension. It is its thickness. Even though this problem does not seemingly belong to computer book processing, we must point it out. I do not mean by this the binding's quality or description, but as I have already said, a certain gradation or book's rhythm. This rhythmical "canon" is often a subconscious component of the designer's work, sometimes it is literally given by the possibilities and limits of printing. When working with a computer – watching the sections of pages and adjusting them on the monitor – it may happen that the "canon" slips out and is substituted by a certain technical stereotype. That is why it is

so important, mainly when working with illustrations often to make test prints and arrange them in the shape of the maquette. This method yields a better possibility of checking everything and not relying on the monitor screen only.

I complete the comparison of the computer with the pencil by the most important idea. No matter how perfect technology is, it can never substitute for the author's creative abilities. The mission of technology is to ease laboriousness, improve processing possibilities, increase variability. However, the author occupies the first place. In the case of children's books these are the authors of text, illustrations and design. As I have already mentioned in this paper, all three groups can make use of computers. However, machines will not substitute for ideas, they will only make the recording of them more perfect. This means

that the designer – the graphic artist – must incessantly study all computer technology and its possibilities employed in the DTP work place. Only then, when the designer knows what the computer can process and in which way, only then is he able to word his demands to the operator properly. It is ideal when the designer is also an operator, because further transfer of ideas from one person to another is not necessary.

We have only to state that computer book-processing or particularly its illustration is a great contribution. Moreover it offers possibilities to create electronic books by means of international computer networks. However, this is another chapter, but not the last one. The author's creative personality cannot be substituted by any machine: this will be always true.

James Howard Fraser

A few Comments on Children's Book Illustration and the Graphic Influences of the Popular Media

Dušan Roll and BIB have been lighting metaphorical candles on behalf of children's book illustration for thirty years. But despite their efforts, the task of providing children with literature and images that uplift and allow reflection is becoming increasingly difficult as this century comes to a close.

The numbers of young people being hypnotized by the ever-increasing pace of television action, the gratuitous violence of computer games, and the addictive themes and graphics of the Internet give us pause and reason for concern.

Most of us who were still teenagers in democratic countries in the late 1950s, remember when there was a certain respect for the mind of the child. Editors, authors, script writers, film makers and business people seeking our pocket money, operated with a collective conscience which recognized a certain vulnerability in children and young people. They, it was understood, must be protected from exploiters. They must even be given the best, if possible.

There were, of course, a few individuals in all these categories who didn't. There were writers for a variety of mediums who created from crass motives. There were hucksters who tried to sell us cheap toys and bikes, radio kits that didn't work, and skin remedies that made our skin worse. Fortunately, these people were in the minority. But in the '90s the just mentioned consensus on

our approach to children has been undergoing a decided change.

The child is increasingly viewed as little more than a market. This is not just the case in the United States but obtains throughout the industrialized nation and even in those in the throes of rapid industrialization.

This attitude shift from the mid-1960s to the present, while not measurable by scientific method, can be determined empirically by sampling a number of mediums: Look for this attitude change in afternoon and weekend television for children. Spend a few hours with any of Rupert Murdoch's News Corporation's international television broadcast channels, to mention a glaring example of company with a great deal of programming for children which is unlikely to lift them a cerebral level.

As to the medium of periodicals for young people, there has been a decided shift in content without apology as we have seen an editorial move to a recipe of market-oriented sex, body culture, and an all-pervading materialist world view. Just browse the newstands anywhere in the world where children any young people congregate. Leaf through an issue of *Can Can* (Tokyo), *Sugar* (London), *YM* (New York), *Teen* (Los Angeles), to mention but a few.

Web sites have been designed for children and young people by numerous organizations,

commercial enterprises, and individuals. Some are intellectually stimulating, even uplifting. Others will make you weep.

Graphics in all three mediums increasingly own more to the style of animated cartoons and the wacky, puff-and-paint school of design that to what we are seeing the illustration submissions here at BIB. Granted, there is little that is ever static national culture but what we have been witnessing in the past two-and-a-half decades is not only an internationalization of children's and young people's culture merging with adult culture in its visual idioms, but a simultaneous radical elimination of transcendent values from the content of these media forms. The emphasis in most of these mediums directed to children, whether print or electronic, is primarily visceral rather than cerebral, delivering a content which fosters self-absorption through both slogans and visual cues. This content change to that which might be termed value-corrosive material seems to be driven largely by the greed of the well-groomed but amoral corporations. I'm embarrassed to admit that some of the most flagrant operations in this field are entrepreneurs from my own country.

You may have been thinking that we as editors, publishers, teachers, child psychologists, librarians, children's film producers and all those professionally involved with children, have been making the world safe for children. But while we have been busy doing all that, there are those who have been working aggressively against us.

Read between the lines of 1996 annual reports of such US corporations as Disney Enterprises, NewsCorp's US subsidiaries directed to children, Mattel Toys, Procter and Gamble, Burger King, RJ Reynolds Tobacco Co. Visit the web sites they have created for children. After such reading, one is likely to be less sanguine about our accomplishments and more concerned with the direction of cultural change in those areas where the idea of civilization is being increasingly reduced to market concepts.

Now you may wonder at this point what all this has to do with children's book illustration and text and the influence of T. V., comics, etcetera. To this I would quickly reply: it has everything to do with these mediums. We could all give scores of examples of instances where "bottom line" calculations determine the level of aesthetic quality in a given medium.

The cultural change we are witnessing is attracting ever-younger individuals expressly to sell them goods and services and sell them with graphics that certainly don't foster a keen aesthetic, while an everdiminishing time is left for us to nurture a pattern of reading and aesthetic development for purposes of enrichment or uplifting the spirit. In general, electronic media-raised children are allowed little time to mature spiritually and stretch mentally to form some degree of value perception before adulthood.

The decade of the 1990s has not been an easy time to carry forward these ideals, derived and tested over the past two centuries, of generally conceded civilizing traditions. At least it has not been easy for those of us who still consider them worthwhile ideals. The background noise, the ever-present fluttering images, and the calculating effort of commercial interests to "catch them young", to use one of Bob Dixon's book titles, all work against us.

Ask any group of young people in Bratislava, Chicago, Tokyo, or smaller communities, what the sources are from which they draw their design and image ideals. Probably we don't really want to know their answers. But we can guess for we know statistically how much time 8-to-15-year-olds are exposed to television and video graphics. We also know the annual rate of increase at which this age group is logging on to the Internet, to say nothing of the estimated viewership of the violent imbecility of a host of computer games. And we can guess what is contributing to their aesthetic development from the graphic nihilism of *Beavis and Butthead* to the often questionable values portrayed by Simpsons.

Do you know that horror is the fastest-selling children's book in the U. S.? R. L. Stine's books sell 4 million copies a month. Have you seen the graphics of this books?

Well, business, over the long term, will determine much of the graphic imagery that is to stimulate all those budding aesthetic concepts floating in the minds of our children and young adults.

The design impact of the electronic visual media currently dominates the design and appearance of the print media for young people. I need only mention the last 30 years of t. v. series book and periodical "tie-ins" as an illustration of publishing for children in the mass-market print area. Have you seen this album autumn's Disney version of *The Wind in the Willows*? When you return home, browse through your country's book trade journal's children's book autumn announcement issue. Count the titles which you feel are being influenced in graphics by the electronic media in your own country or from the US. In such an exercise one readily sees the merging of the lowest common denominator of television, computer game, and Internet graphics in the print area of what we might call transition book illustration for young people. And I might add that much of this transition literature in the United States appears only in soft cover which has a far greater readership than the hard back illustrated book.

There is developing an almost seamless graphic continuum drawn from advertising, horror films, video games, comics and yet more advertising. And it doesn't look as though it will stop anytime soon because, sad to say, business is the driving force and will continue to be so whether

we like it or not and the mediums of choice will be electronic.

In some countries there may be a brief delay while waiting for developments in technology with linked home computers being necessary to make the market worthwhile. Yet most of us are aware that many child-oriented corporations already operate plans the children's toy, toy-book, periodical, t. v., CD, film, and junk food markets. The collective long-term goal of the majority of these corporations remains, although not stated quite so bluntly perhaps, to displace the time-honored traditions of oral and written literature and art, and the local cuisine, with the Disney version of life and literature, MTV's version of visual art, and McDonald's version of food. In September 1997 we should be developing national strategies to assist in keeping the best of our national visual and print traditions alive!

In conclusion, I think BIB and BIBIANA in their new phases need to be confidently aggressive. They need to look at the relatively inexpensive technology of the Internet as a means for taking an activist role. We've seen here what BIBIANA is doing for the visual education of children. Now there is the opportunity to let the world see this creativeness almost instantly.

The same could be said for BIB. We could even be watching the jury deliberations of the next Bienale on our home computers. And just imagine what the centers for children's literature around the world could be doing in a concerted effort, if they were to make use of the current technology. We just may be able to recover some of the territory of aesthetic education and much more which we are currently losing to the exploitive, commercial use of electronic media.

János Kass

A few thoughts on illustrating books

In the middle of the 18th century, in the year 1786, Captain Cook took with him for one of his a young botanist, Mr. Bangl, and a draughtsman, Mr. Parkinson, who during the long sea-journey prepared more than seven hundred brilliant copper engravings. (It is mystery why these beautiful works were not published at the time.)

Recently a British newspaper announced that the engravings were published in a special, well cured, numbered edition, on special paper, following the instruction given by the artist. The engravings represent plants and inform us in a vivid and fresh way about the tropical world, revealing at the same time the fantastic talent, the intuition and the patience of the artist.

The result has an elementary strength! The newspaper tells of the whole process, the copper plates, the precision of the printing, the absolute respect of the artist.

The engravings are rich in colours, are crystal-clean, full of fine tonalities and rich details and give an incredible impression. Prepared about three centuries ago, they bring us with unimpaired freshness the impressions collected by the artist. Making a comparison: they are like frozen fruit, fully enjoyable, and we can feel the artist near to us too. The effect is the same as the one of opening of the Egyptian tombs: there is the identity between the intentions and the executed works. In our case the artist isn't

unknown. We know his name and the fact that he departed for Australia at the age of twenty three.

Here is ray of light, born in a faraway place and directed to the future, here we have a glimpse of a supernova. The source of energy doesn't exist anymore, but we are enjoying the engravings, our life is richer because of them. Who has the profit of an artistic work? The artist? Posterity? Why did the young artist do this gigantic work on the board of a ship, living in hard conditions, in heat and humidity, without the possibility of publication? We know that the young Parkinson died during the voyage, as a consequence of the hardships.

I can mention another example – that of the *"Turkish Miniatures"* published by the Magyar Helikon – in this example tells us another story, contrasting with the first. The little paintings recorded the wars of the Turks against Hungary, the glorious deeds of Soliman the Great. The painter of the miniatures had a series of prescriptions to respect: it is like dancing with bent legs, as the saying goes. The talent of the artist and the acute, elementary desire to communicate, together created masterpieces. The painter illustrates with rich details, with fantastic colours a part of history that from the point of view of Hungary was a tragedy. It's never good to be defeated but time can bring the positions closer.

Today we can enjoy the masterly painted illustrations of the glorious advance of the Turkish army, forgetting that we were the vanquished. On the pages we can see with every detail how the Hungarian soldiers were thrown in the Danube, how their severed heads were piled in pyramids, how the sad Hungarian prisoners followed in chains the glorious army. We can see the scenes of the death of Sultan Soliman at Szigetvár and the conspiracy – befitting the 20. century – to conceal the facts from fighting army. We can follow the big parade, how the Turks brought home – for political reasons – the corpse, dressed in beautiful clothes, with heavy makeup ...

Very clever compositions, practically no perspective, a tragic atmosphere: we can imperturbably enjoy this kind of transmission of news from the past. Yes, in that time this was the way to send messages, news, with these little, but perfect illustrations.

Illustrations? Information about a period?

But we are living in the era of television! Do we need any more illustrations?

Here is another book in front of me. In the farthest part of Scotland, on a little island less than one kilometer long, is living a family whose only work is to take care the lighthouse. A young artist spent years on this island, and not for tourism: the island lacks any interest from that point of view. The young man intended to inform us about the plants and the animals of the island. There – not as in Galapagos – nothing has changed since the glacial period, there is a peaceful equilibrium between the plants and the animals, the birds, the seals, the little mammals. No smog, no gas escaped from cars ruined the nature of the little island.

We all know it too well: the last 50 years have destroyed more of the species developed since the evolution, that all of the centuries before did ...

The perfect drawings and watercolours inform us about every little detail. We can tell that the

island, fortunately untouched by cruel civilisation, has a rich and multiform life. The scientist too can use the illustrations: on the leg of a little bird there is a red ring, informing us as to its movements. In a beautiful editions this book contains important information!

The drawings are full of the optimism of the artist who spend years in solitude and silence, if you can call silence the perpetual movement of the birds, their voices, the eternal wind and the sound of the waves against the rocks. Why did the artist dedicated his talent to a similar, unpretentious work? Did he want to communicate to us something or did he want only find shelter from rough civilisation illuminated by neon? Was it a defence, or a message for the future?

All these questions aren't important. The main thing is the infinite variety of existence. The artist's intentions were the same that emerged at the dawn of human life. We know that the first hunters drew with coal or soot buffals and mammoths on the walls of the cave. Man needed these signs on the walls. He felt it only instinctively but the drawings meant for him life, meat to eat, the future!

We can find many other examples. Why did Picasso want to illustrate Ovidius, Gustave Dore and Szalay *Don Quijote*? Why did Dürer carve in wood the four Knights of the *Apocalypse*, or György Buday illustrate the popular ballads of the székely. After Rembrandt and Chagall why did people keep illustrating the *Bible*? Why are the illustrations of Mihály Zichy to "*The tragedy of Man*" of Madách so important for us? Why do children draw on walls and why so many persons feel the urge to express themselves in graffiti? It's enough to think of the mescaline-inspired dreams of William Morris, the linear drawings of Weöres and Cocteau, the leaves pressed on paper of Tandori, the tales of Andersen illustrated by Hockney, the Slovakian Legends of Albín Brunovský, the Jacques Tournebroke of Hincz, the Tour de France of Du-

bois. The collaboration between Lajos Kozma and Imre Kner. The pure colours of Matisse. The Sappho of Maillol. The "Bánk bán" of Konecsni. The Villon-drawings of Endre Szász. The cathedral of wires of Paul Flora. The Saint Christophorus of Cranach. The frivolous ladies of Alois Mucha. The sea-storm of Hokusai. The masterpieces of unknown miniaturists. The lithographies of Henri Toulouse-Lautrec. The acute illustrations for children of Sendac. Oldenburg and Segal. Emil Nolde and Willy Baumeister. The illustrations of Braque for Apollinaire or the bleak desert of ice of Beuys. These illustrations are like the infinite variety of nature. Why do the birds show their rainbow-coloured plumes? Is it defence, survival, the conservation of the race. the sign for mating? The sign of the beginning or of the end? It is both! Why is this artistic genre ready for rebirth, to offer us new and new illustrations? Is it only the work of the publishers? What is inspiring us to prepare new illustrations-interpretations of the *Bible* after Chagall and Rembrandt? What sense is there in filling white paper white paper with drawings and paintings and publishing them in one hundred or in one hundred thousand copies?

The – perhaps only possible – answer is: multiform nature is reproducing itself for the future. Only the richness of life renders existence supportable.

The Egyptian clerk writing on papyrus had his view of the world and so too the monk who, inspired by transcendental thoughts, painted his miniatures in the seclusion of a monastery. The impatient, vagabond man of the 20th century has his view of the life too. We know of astronauts who were drawing in the complete silence of space, admiring the black sky and the faraway Earth no bigger than a ball. Being in perfect solitude they waited to return to earth, covered by dirt thousands of little problems and ruined by demagogy but ever so important for men, where the richness of life is the guarantee of credit and

faith for the humanity hoping and trembling for the future.

On this scenery there is space too for illustrations, for this activity so many times declared dead. It is fashionable to speak badly of so many things but the first book that a child takes in his little hands is an illustrated book, and so is the *Bible* that is used for our funerals. In the opinion of some theoreticians illustrations are only a second category genre but it is an opinion that characterizes only this little part of Europe. It is not words but quality that gives value and rank to the works, to all activities, and illustrations will live till books and libraries will cease to exist on earth.

In 1990 at the ATYPI conference the Americans brought to Oxford seven MacIntosh computers of Large capacity, presenting to hundreds of participants – experts from all over the world – several programmes (Windows, Adobe, etc).

It is not necessary to comment on this event, comparable only to the importance of Gutenberg's deeds – because since then for seven years the world has been travelling toward the year 2000 on the highway of the Internet.

In the year 1980 in Europe there weren't any computers capable of realizing drawing programmes.

In 1981 at the first Computer Animations Congress we presented in the production of Halas & Batchelor the 10 minute film "*Dilemma*" (storyboard, design: János Kass). The film was made 17 years ago at Dallas, USA, by Eric Brown, at the Computer Creation firm.

In that period programmes like this were possible to produce only in three places in the United States (NASA: Saturn programme of 20 minutes, The Institute of Technology, New York and Computer Creation, Dallas) and in Europe nowhere ...

Today it's enough to think of the Lion King of Walt Disney or of the programmes of Cartoon Network! The television offers us computer animation for 24 hours a day.

Still, we need Leonardo to free the screens from the prison of glacial indifference and techni-

cality and to sprinkle them with the golden powder of real art!

Karel Teissig

On Trust in Senses and the Sense

Motto: Illustrations for Children and Present Day Reality

We are born to a world we do not understand and we leave the world which is beyond our ken. Gradually our senses fail and we are filled by insecurity from the new things we have stopped understanding. As the Bratislava Biennial shielded itself to a certain extent rather vaguely by the slogan about the relation of illustration for children and the young to present day reality, we can undoubtedly put everything under that title. I suppose that we shall have to concentrate on partial problems very carefully, because no matter how art may seem luring and unlimited, it is true, that the genuineness of artistic expression consists in exactness.

What can we expect from children's illustrations entering the world in those early hours of human life (so important), illustrations which painfully long for the revival of good in Man by aesthetic experience.

It is easy to say and easy to turn into bitter triviality which reveals the precarious character of well-meant premises in regard to present day reality.

It is enough to notice the phenomena which appeared in post-communist countries in misfortunate contrast to such ideas as the freedom and identity of human beings.

In a totalitarian environment the constant loss of continuity of cultural development, social insecurity, lies and selfdeception marked the society

in such a way that could be hardly imagined and thought through to the end.

I shall tackle one thing: the relation to animals, which belong undoubtedly, together with the countryside, "plants, waters and wind" to the living environment of our world. Where does the love for animals, beetles, butterflies, inhabitants of mysterious forest undergrowths or seas disappear? We learn from the media that two young policemen have beaten a little puppy to death with shovels: the people who should take care of all that is good and right in the way of Kipling-esque brotherhood. The people who probably in their childhood skimmed over the pages of books, decorated with the illustrations of living creatures. Was it useless? I do not know how to understand it. Would not such a theme be worth a thorough study?

Cynical Jaroslav Hašek (no worries about his writerly fame as antimilitarist and Kafka's counterpart) entertained his readers with the little Czech man Shveik, selling dogs in the tragic, multicultural city of Prague. The tragic character of this time ensued most probably from the unconsummated coexistence of the Czechs and the Germans, who were not capable of selfreflection which would have shifted their relations from unfortunate national rivalry towards the tolerance of coexistence. This is a great theme: as we can find out every day, the world is still terrible. How to find a way,

without instructions of dealing with it by means of patient questioning?

Fairy tales managed how to separate good from evil. We are amazed how uncompromisingly drastic is the picture of the world they present us, full of evil wizards, cunning dwarfs and dragons, where evil forces order the cutting off of parts of bodies, which miraculously grow together when sprinkled with living water. Important corpses still lie in their glass coffins in mausoleums, embalmed like horrifying Snowwhites. Do we lack in the defence of our organism the ability to make the picture of evil merge again with the value scale of moral awareness? Do we lack in conviction and humour, so necessary for defence?

The world is full of orphans, and the links between art and culture generate the motherly principle in this forlorn and cruel world.

I am leaving on purpose the problem which may be cardinal – how can children's books and illustrations withstand the deadly shelling of such other media as television or computer games – as a theme for the more competent.

Would not it be possible to find in the fantasy of modern authors an emphatic continuation of the stories speaking of the victory of good over evil?

The values and gems which seemed so genuine and undoubtedly impregnable are so easily lost and abandoned. Anyway, let us stick to our last. A tradition of great children's book illustrations has been preserved in my country as the family silver of fairy-tale stories, which with supertemporal fantasy depicted the world of evil, as well as that of good, princesses and princes, undoubtedly standing on the side of the good. I have in mind such illustrators as Adolf Kašpar, Artuš Scheiner, František Tichý, Jiří Trnka, Mirko Hanák, Kamil Lhoták and Eva Bednářová. None of them has been tempted by selfishness, which would have endangered the noble, uncompromising characters of their artistic conscience.

The temporary wind of commercialization blew and all of a sudden it seems as if their gene-

rational successors did not have enough power to resist it. And it was the impressive polyphony of Czech illustration (I would also like to mention the Slovak artists like Albín Brunovský, Cipár, Gažovič, Kállay and Bombová) who were evaluated as a world curio as they all grew from the opposition. When we open the new books with overstylized affected humorous little monsters flirting with Disney, who himself lost a lot at the vanity fair of cheap world fame, they try to joke with us. The Czech film poster died of the same disease, being substituted by cosmopolitan commerce. At the recent extensive display of posters from the 'sixties in Brno it was possible to make a critical evaluation. It showed that for example collage, which only flirts with the original meaning of compiled clips, without creating dramatic content, is hollow. Jiří Kolář and his work represent a positive example of collage. It has been proved that perfect typography means less than was supposed, and wit, explosive ideas and human hand and heart survived and remained irreplaceable in poster expression. The poster from Poland was a positive example.

What I also miss in the present day editions is a more numerous selection of books for older children such as the monumental legends which used to make readers familiar with ancient cultures, with Egypt and with the world of noble warriors as, for example, the Spanish Cid, the royal musketeers or with the legends of non-European cultures, of Africa, both Americas, Oceania or the country of the rising sun. Such titles were always accompanied with great epically composed frustration which, as to its form, was positively inspired by the art of exotic aboriginals or the character of other epochs.

How is it possible that parents and grand parents brought up on Trnka's illustrations *to The Beetles, on Hauf's Caravan* and on Hrubín, started lightheartedly buying kitsch books for their children and grand children. This is beyond me. Was that proverbial good taste so superficial?

I would love to believe that classical literature both for children and the adult will return to the book market. Life cannot be understood without Emma Bovary, Dostoevsky, Alan Poe, Dickens or Thackeray, without Goethe's *Faust* or other similar authors and works.

There are many reasons for their return.

Recently quite a radical specialization in the field of artistic works is taking place in the countries of Central Europe (as far as I am able to ascertain) which is detrimental to the subject matter because it is of limiting character. Illustrator or poster maker has lost professional contact with free creation, with autonomous creative process, which was conditioned by authentic knowledge of nature in non-programme work "pro domo sui" and then transferred unbiased, fresh experience into a thematic task. An artist must draw on the real world, a literary text is not a sufficient source, our senses must examine and try it somewhere, gain and acquire the ability to picture, in order to dare to deal with the inner model, and in such a way endow the programme work with freshness of identical knowledge, so that the complexion a sheet of illustration can pulsate with life and the beauties of the world.

The so called "clear" artist of today, who has promoted chance to an idol and briskly and provokingly shoots at the reader, to make him understand his creative deed in his own way, keeps him actually on the verge of shameful snobbery.

Former illustrators were primarily painters, who responsibly transferred the fortunate experience in painting, into their work, even if this

was also for financial reasons. But all this worked.

I do not think that the illustrator should imagine himself to be in the child reader's soul, but he should reveal by a captivating explanation the things which are not quite clear in the text. The illustrator should influence the young reader's sensitivity, sharpen his senses and disclose in him his early sense of mystery, intimacy and love.

It is an advantage to use colourist talent, it is possible to find comfort in flowing colours, delight in sensitively structured surface, noticing the differences between various techniques. The melody of a clear line is charming, twisted lines in pen-drawing are exciting, because the surface of the drawing and the graphic sheet have a feminine complexion.

In book illustration I find something kindred to theatre, to acting. It is an art on the verge of performance and free creation. It reminds us of the phenomenon of mirroring, the famous drop reflecting totally and perfectly the world's global character. It is like the drop of living water which heals in fairy tales.

Just now I have remembered an ambitious sentence of Picasso's. It is as good as a Jewish anecdote and completes a lot of what has not been said. Picasso said: "At the age of fourteen I could paint like Raphael and it took me many years until I learnt to paint like children."

Thank you for your attention. To you, colleagues from other countries which you represent at this famous and traditional gathering I convey a greeting from the Czech illustrators.

Jeanine Despinette

The Illustrator in His Relationship to Today's Conditions of Life

As always the BIB offers rich material and stimuli for consideration, reveals to us the constant renewal, revival and varied character of the expressions of this craft of artistic creation that children's book illustration undoubtedly is.

I read carefully the various proposals for the themes offered to the symposium organised within the framework of the opening of the BIB exhibition, and I found in them the synthesis of most of the problems which face our work in the International Centre of Education I found in Charleville, France. The Centre is focused on creative interactions in the field of books, theatre and film in the context of technological development of our era. I will try to present my paper, considering the theme "The illustrator in his relationship to today's conditions of life".

All children of the earth have similar primary needs corresponding to the periods of awakening, discovery and cognition of life, which are called CHILDHOOD all over the world. However, in every country teachers and those engaged in education have specific demands and answers which satisfy the children and these can differ according to individual countries from one another in their pictorial expressions concerning the same themes. It is also obvious, that the relation between TEXT and PICTURE is implicitly based on the national context of PRINTING and AUDIO-

VISUAL CHARACTER and these relations do not develop in the same way in each country or, naturally, also on every continent.

However, whatever language is concerned – in the first stage of getting used to the life in a family and social context – children need stimulation, awakening and also cognitive books, intended for learning the signs – reading (alphabet) and figures. Learning must lead not only to reading but also to communication with others through personal reading (literature) – books destined for cognition of codes, signs and symbols of the life of today... cultural signs, some of which are universal, others specific and closely connected with the cultural heritage of each civilisation.

Etienne Delesset, Diodorov, Michael Foreman, Arcadio Lobato, Angelo Lago, Leo Lionni, Ruben Matuck, Pravi Paranjouk, Jan Tamsaar, Joseph Wilkon... all these have been focussing their attention on ecology, on ecological problems. Their messages are not interchangeable. Yet they can be read – of course as complementary material – by all children in the world. "Awakening" books (books of discovery) in the case of which the illustrator is expected to pay due attention to positive value relations which must be created among human beings in order to strengthen emotional education (love for one's parents, friendship, understanding of something different, tolerance).

rance...) – also have to strengthen aesthetic feelings. At the same time they must help children understand, at least partially, the initial relative concepts of beauty and ugliness in the given civilization. Because of all this the illustrator is expected to paint or draw relatively specific pictures as documents – as the witnesses of children's everyday life in the family, school, in public life... or absolutely specific pictures as documentary films about the life of today and yesterday, about the development of towns, agriculture, industry, technical inventions, scientific activities – a certain number of book pictures which appear in children's eyes in a more ephemeral and passing way than those on TV screens.

In the end all children also need, at the same time as these books of didactic cognition, COLOUR LITERATURE (literature in colour) created by the authors of fairy tales, tales, poetry, by painters and artists so that all ways of imagination and its world can be open and considered as something sacrosanct...

Those of us who have regularly visited specialized book exhibitions in the course of the past decade have seen that publishers have introduced to the market a great number of objects of "multisensitive" reading in the most varied materials – on paper, cardboard, plastic material, and illuminated screens with static or animated figures.

It is obvious that text and illustrations are subject to the influence of audiovisual possibilities as far as their form, exterior as well as their profundity and content are concerned.

It is sure that in the future – even from now – the authors who want to be published, will have to be not only writers and artists endowed with a good imagination, but also skilful technologists, in order to be able to supervise the production of their books and other accompanying objects, which the books may need (audiocassettes, videocassettes, films...). Film makers and those engaged in television transmission face the same

problems, but in an opposite order of succession, with "novelization" of what the publishers consider to be profitable.

Cybernetic (virtual) space is decreasingly less potential in book publishing. In the atmosphere of permanent exchange in the field of visual communication in which we live today, it is sure that an unreal graphic style and descriptive illustrations are under the pressure of topicalization from the medial world or environment, where the phenomenon of fashion or being "in" requires the constantly accelerated speed in everything.

In the countries with high audiovisual technology, publishers were indeed forced to understand books as objects. In some of them we can see that everything was researched because they wanted the child to find both visual and tactile delight and joy when reading, and make him tenderly encounter and touch the poetry of the imaginary world. Writers started resolutely practising the "post modern" way of writing, which enabled them to reveal impressive fiction linked to the real world to their small readers, in the literary environment which is integrated to a certain extent half way between film dialogue and the reels of realistic animated cartoons. Today as well as yesterday, children want stories and plots. It is essential for them to understand the language of those who write for them in words and pictures.

Draftsmen's graphic artists' and designers' good command of a programme really changes the "appearance" of the means of expression.

If today an illustrated book in its noble old artistic tradition is no longer a current picture album and if the end of its publishing is closely connected with, and caused by, electronics and modern machinery, we must also admit that it would not exist at all without inventiveness and development of graphic and other art, or without imagination of artists and painters – illustrators.

An ideal concept of this experience of pictorial-textual communication, which is labelled with the uniform, general term "literature in colour" still remains essential not only in the eyes of critics but young, child readers, too.

It is sure that hand in hand with the arrival of television and satellite television, film and photography, the PAINTED (ANIMATED) PICTURE brought about a significant transformation in the way of reading printed picture, whether it is printed material or books. All this was possible, because painted animated picture covers a vast area of information space and is typical in the system of its visual communication of present day town life and its complexity.

The demand for creativity addressed to artists-illustrators has become an extreme requirement claiming the expressive artistic treatment or atmosphere of a picture. From this time artists-illustrators must visualize their ideas, enable the young readers to memorize a certain passage or form, appreciate its colourfulness, the character's approach and help the "educational" message to be accepted in the aesthetic environment or atmosphere. As a literary work is concerned, it must have a sort of theatrical character in order to be presented on stage.

However, if somebody critically reads the picture albums made for children as frequently as I do, he or she will be well aware of the fact how much reading dynamism is closely connected with the dynamism of the artist's – illustrator's work.

A book is a medium, among other basic means of expression- media of thinking and creativity. Literature and illustrations are acts of human communication. In my opinion artists-painters are responsible, more than ever before, for the spontaneous relation and approach, for the acceptance or refusal of life as far as the future generation is concerned, because it is their pictures which serve and will serve as a creative starting point for the development of those children's

imagination, because their points of view have already been strongly influenced by moving pictures.

As we can see that such publishers as Lemniscat, Mladé letá (Young Years) and Grasset take over the initiative and have their books illustrated by illustrators from 10 different countries in America, Asia and Europe, in accordance with the The Regulations – Laws of the *Declaration of Children's rights*, it seems that we can be satisfied and trust the power of their imagination and abilities.

We have arrived as far as the legal text of the universal convention, and it is up to us to word an exact concept of a CHILD in relation to the adult, its family and the society, in such a way that would be both uniform and yet varied. This is actually the permanent and travelling contest of the artists mentioned who have spontaneously given evidence of the apriori character of the childhood of the society in which they live.

Michael Foreman joins Anastasia Archipova, Dušan Kállay and Štefan Zavrel in their fantastic and surreal concepts, in order to protect the children's right for childhood, in which the wings of imagination will not be limited and where the family will occupy a privileged position in education and upbringing. Helm Heine's humour responds to that of Tony Ross, if the right for a dialogue between generations is concerned. The enlightened tenderness and kindness emanating from their pictures evokes a painful sensation if the RIGHT for security and unexploitedness of children are concerned.

Daniele Bour, Hanna Tain and Paul Elinski adhere to the same principles. Peace and balanced atmosphere embrace us when we look at the works of Dieter and Ingrid Schubert and Satoshi Kitamura. They are most concerned with the RIGHT for education and they imply it by their refusal to accept racial discrimination, and their adherence to understanding on an international scale.

The creative activity of the artists employing the "childish" way of expression in their PICTU-

RES is more authentic than that of those ones using all their technical skills.

Paola Vassalli

Art as a Celebration

The subject *The illustrator in his relationship to today's conditions of life* is not a simple one and I have decided that one way of facing it could be through a study of the work of an artist who has made a significant mark on this second half of the 20th century.

I have chosen to speak to you about Leo Lionni, an artist whom we Italians consider to be one of our greatest.

My paper comes from a research in the entire work of Lionni, made in collaboration with Andrea Rauch, which became an exhibition presented in Tokyo at the end of last year which will be in Sienna in a few days.

It is difficult to talk about Lionni without taking into consideration the visual culture of the whole century. His cosmopolitan background and his artistic research place him amongst the most interesting figures of the century. He was born in Poland in 1910, travelled with his parents from Belgium to the United States in the early years of his life, settled in Italy in the 20's and 30's, emigrated to the USA again because of the racial laws, and come back to Italy in 1960; since then he has spent his time in an artistic cultural shuttle between Italy and the USA. Between these biographical details, there has been an enormous flow of works, ideas, inspirations. He belonged to the second futurist Movement of Marinetti, established a life-long association with Alexander Calder

and Ben Shaw, and has been art director of some of the most important American periodicals such as "Time Life" and "Print". Lionni is even recognised as one of the fathers on Graphic Design, first in America and then world wide, and is one of the most talented and profound authors of children's literature.

Since 1959 Lionni has written and illustrated one children's book every year and has an extraordinary success both with the critics and the public. Up the present more than six million copies of his books have sold all over the world.

Lionni's wide range of interests, together with complete understanding of the world of children, are the basic inspiration of this paper. I shall in fact analyse the work of Lionni, as a children's author, in the light of his complex experiences as an artist and a man of culture of his century. I shall not therefore only describe illustrations "for children" but I will try to show Lionni's drawings in relationship with all his works.

I shall go from the abstract and conceptual art of *Little Blue and Little Yellow* placed in the context of the graphic design works of the 40's and 50's, to the imaginary realism of *The Biggest house in the World*, placed in the context of the large sculptures of the *Parallel Botany* cycle. I shall go through the experiences which have left important traces in the artist's work: the study or the mosaics of Ravenna, and of Mexican and

Indian folklore. This is in order to show that the celebration of the children's book is only a part even though an important one, of wider artistic process which comes together as a witness of this century.

Prologue or *Imaginary Portraits*

One day, on a sudden impulse, I went up to the studio, placed a small canvas on the easel and painted the face of a man. Unwitting participant in an art "happening" that did concern him a bit, he looked at me in amazement. It was the first of my long series of imaginary portraits.

Imaginary Portraits, which Lionni began to paint in the United States at the end of the 50's, were shown for the first time in Milan and then in Rome in 1962. It was a whole exhibition of portraits, real and imaginary: some well known faces, together with a gallery of ordinary people, amongst which it was possible to recognise, if not oneself, certainly one's next-door neighbour.

Little Blue and Little Yellow

In 1959 Lionni published his first book for children, *Little Blue and Little Yellow*, which was a great success all over the world. It is an absolutely new and original book, the protagonists of which are two pieces of coloured paper, or rather two colours – Little Blue and Little Yellow. Using collage the artist obtains with his offcut and torn paper, an effect of extreme concreteness together with an unreality.

Student and teacher of visual perception, Lionni reaches in this book the maximum of abstraction, through an absolute essentiality of language. Later, in his children's books, he will again make use of figure, but only to push the outlines to an extreme limit beyond which they would no longer be figures. Just as in *Little Blue and Little Yellow*, so on cover of *Designs for the printed Page*.

We find pieces of paper cut and torn up, elements of project which gives a definition to space and becomes language.

The same rationality of project and suggestion

of the story can be found in the graphic design works of the 40's and 50's, created for "Fortune", for the graphical periodical "Print", and also for the museum of Modern Art in New York and for Olivetti, for whom Lionni was Art Director in those years.

It is essentially a game, a kind of writing in a pure state on which the figures, in the levity of the graphic composition, tell their own stories, as in the more recent works in the Aria Series.

Tico and the Golden Wings

The two photographic journeys to India, in 1956 and 1958 leave important traces in the work of Lionni who in 1964, six years after his last visit, had printed one of his most often quoted books from an iconographical point of view: *Tico and The Golden Wings*. Certainly the story of Tico, the bird born without wings who by magic spell obtains golden wings but in the end takes them off to return being a bird with black wings like all the other birds, reminds us of the story of *The Happy Prince* by Oscar Wilde, but it reminds us also of visual experiences of his stay in India, which Lionni photographed for the American periodical "Fortune".

On my Beach there are many Pebbles

In 1961 Lionni published his third book *On my Beach there are many Pebbles*. The immediate reference is to his return to Italy and to the beach of Lavagna, in the Gulf of Genoa, where the artist went to live with his family after many years spent in the USA. The pebbles on the beach suggested and created objects. Of course, the forms of the pebbles were "drawn", by the hand of the artist, and the creativity of Lionni intervenes to underline what nature and chance have only hinted at; the pebbles on the beach at Lavagna are ready-made "ante litteram", never only "found" but always recreated and planned.

Many years later at the beginning of the 80's, Lionni in his "Earth" designs, corrected the thrust of his work, still remaining faithful to the "hyper-realism" of the drawing.

The Biggest House in the World

"Ever since I was a child, I have put in order stones, moss and little ferns inside the empty walls of an aquarium, and created a miniature world for lizards, snails, and tortoises, an imaginary garden for real toads. I was frightened by the immensity of nature and looked for a refuge in these little worlds which were artificial, pretended, ordered and predictable. I still feel the same anxiety, and the plants in my botany, and the earth from which they grow are obviously fragments of a similar pretence. What is new, is the need to understand, if not the chaotic identity of nature, at least its style".

With these words Lionni presented in 1977 the works in the cycle *The Parallel Botany* which were to be completed in the *Project for an Imaginary Garden*, and in a children's book *The Biggest House in the World*. The book tells the story of the snail who builds for himself the biggest house in the world so heavy that in the end it squashes the vainglorious snail.

The Greentail Mouse

Drawn in 1973, this is the only children's book which Lionni created with the softness of oil colours. The story, like many other stories of Leo, Tells of the search for personal image and identity. During a carnival the mice in the wood dress up as fierce animals, lose their own identity and think that they are what they represents. It is a delirium of identification and power, from which they are cured only by their own relationship with a mouse "dressed up as himself"; a mouse who has managed to remain sane and has not lost, in his disguise, his own image and identity.

Once again Lionni falls back on his experiences as a traveller, interested in all things connected with art and with life. The masks seen at Baema in Mexico, with clear well-defined colours, typical of popular Latin-American art mingle with the masks of Greek tragedy, and hide the deep truths of men.

Pezzettino

Pezzettino, written in 1975, is the only of the coloured stones, which searches for its own identity by asking the mosaic animals if by any chance it has not been lost by one of them. *Pezzettino* is the metaphor of man, who like and yet unlike other human being, has constructed a civilisation, for which Lionni joyfully feels responsible as a man and as an artist. Son of a diamond-cutter during a journey to Ravenna, Lionni discovered the historic mosaic of the city and was fascinated by the work of the artisans who still practice that ancient art. It is an art which he was to study and which ended up by having a profound effect on his original ideals of graphic design projects.

Epilogue or the *Black Table*

"Why a black table?" – Leo's mother asks – "Because on a black table the colours are more beautiful". And what should one put on the black table, in order that the colours may be more beautiful, if not the artistic experiences and motions of more than half a century, lived as a protagonist of visual culture? Lionni therefore moves his big table like a "grill" for graphics and on this he draws up old memories and recent emotions: a chameleon immersed in a "parallel" landscape, fragments of an elementary Botany and, naturally, imaginary, portraits. All this lies between the emotions of painting and the rationality of design.

The paintings of Leo Lionni, placed on a black table, do not appear to us as memories coming to the surface but almost as a declaration of poetry. From the "tables" emerge clearly, in fact, the reasons behind the painting and the drawing of Lionni. The "Black Tables" become almost a summary, or a key for a privileged insight to observe the thought of Leo Lionni and its translation into painting.

We all know the "children's book illustrator and author" Lionni. But not all of us know the artist in the same way.

With this presentation I hope to have given you a taste of his whole work and of how much of it is his books for children.

His artistic, cultural and intellectual career takes place "between worlds", as his biography, that will be published in Germany in a few months, is titled. Between the old continent – born in Holland, a life spent in Italy, a German mother – and the States, where most of his mature work as a designer takes place. We must not forget that what is happening in America today, in graphic design and not only, is the result of the work of only a few artists that operated between the 40's and the 50's.

Once back in Italy Lionni dedicated himself to sculpture, during all this life he has painted and he also has written tree books, apart from the children ones.

Little Blue and Little Yellow is the result of this culture. Without the graphic designer work Lionni had done for "Time Life" in America, probably *Little Blue and Little Yellow* would not have been invented and without his friendship with Sandy Calder maybe it would have been different.

If we consider his children's books in the light of his life we can see how many elements tend to appear from to time.

In the idea of solidarity we always find the isolation, and the solution to this isolation, the feeling

of being different and finding a way to come together, a moment of unity and synthesis with others.

Lionni's books for children just as any other great author's books are small "tranches de vie" of the author and speak about him and his own philosophy.

They are a message for Lionni a political, social and moral message.

Lionni says: "Art is celebration: the celebration of man, of this humanity, his history, his culture. There are words that are just like objects they have a certain weight, but I just do not understand them, one of these words is sacredness.

What is sacredness? I think I use this word a little too much considering I am atheistic.

Sacredness is what I would expect from my best work, a respect, a dignity and a pride, a moment of joy for the fact of being one the many hundreds of thousand people that are building a culture.

In this sense and only in this one, acting in art is important.

It's like celebrating the sacredness of man.

Ivan Stadtrucker

Book Illustration and Its Communicative and Other Influences

It seems that book illustration is an ancient phenomenon, but from my, almost mass-medial, aspect it is not. Of course when there is a conversation about the olden days and their written memorials, I, as well as anybody else, recollect in my memory old manuscripts, chronicles, recordings, judgments and other documents. We all remember: they had decorative and often gilded initials and sketches and paintings on the margin completed and elucidated what the text was about... and all which was written was sacrosanct.

The achievements of ancient scribes, illuminators and illustrators of arts and crafts character have been admired until today. And we also know – but we somehow do not realize it – that the written materials they bequeathed us were destined solely for the chosen; only for a small circle of people who lived at the royal court or in monasteries.

Other “texts” – mural paintings – were accessible and legible for the other people. These decorated the temple walls and, still longer ago, cave walls. The social environment of the period, common people, members of the local community or village were much more influenced by mural paintings which were of informative character and, as we would say today, were much more impressive from the aspect of mass communication, as all the individuals could see, perceive the same painting, the same information or message.

Such communication was effective and had its specific features, but in those cases text was absent, the written word was missing. This message or recording did not reckon with the reader. Script was substituted by picture.

And so – this is the more exact wording I would like to arrive at – book illustration as a cultural phenomenon started to exist after Gutenberg, following the invention of the printing press.

The necessity of a picture's or painting's existence to facilitate the easier or more complex understanding of text still remains varied. There are works (scientific, didactic) which can hardly do without illustration, because the “painted” portraits, maps are the organic component of the “written” text. Printing and book printing of this sort, however, represent a special case.

For us at the BIB, the more general case is also the more interesting, i. e. when the author's statement (chronicler's notice, writer's message) inserted in the text maintains its autonomous character. This happens in cases of most literary works. A Biblical prophecy, as well as an Aesop's fable, folk tale or novel, existed for centuries and were and are understandable without any additional, complementary or explanatory pictures.

However, a significant change takes place in the civilization process.

This does not happen at once or suddenly but after some time, more precisely when a certain

book gets to a sufficient number of people sufficiently often. It is not a miracle but a special psychologic-social phenomenon: people get used to a certain literary work in a certain form. From that moment – owing to the illustrator – the text itself becomes incomplete for the reader.

Or something else: something which was not necessarily painted, drawn, engraved or literally added in the margin (it need not have been there) becomes an organic component of the verbal message. The illustration becomes an organic and so an immanent component of the previously autonomous work of art (!) so that its absence is felt as an error, or if offered another version (illustrations by other artist) the reader does not accept it at all, as he or she considers it inadequate, less expressive or even a failure.

Mankind has read the prophetic revelation, the words: "And I saw; and I behold a white horse; and he that sat on it had a bow; and a crown was given unto him: and he went forth conquering, and to conquer." And then Dürer came with his *Apocalypse* and many saw what appeared to the prophet. Today, thanks to Dürer we have the same idea of "the stars of heaven fell unto earth, even as a fig tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind."

Painted things as well as written ones – are preserved in books.

Man returns to the book and skims over its pages.

Illustrations in book define the literary character and its world to the reader, to many readers, often to several generations.

They make him unambiguous and clear-cut.

The reader fully or partly identifies with the illustrator's idea. The reader may not identify with the illustrator's idea and refuses it. But even when illustrations fulfil their irreplaceable task they serve the reader as a stimulating model, as a reference basis, and opposing or ensuing from them he creates his own idea of the given literary character and his world.

We do not always take into consideration the intensity of the reader's experience and his socio-cultural and culturological consequences.

I remind you of Shveik. Not only Hašek's but also Lada's. Josef Lada made up and drew Shveik. This character is so fixed in the social consciousness of readers (mainly the Czechs) that when the director of the acted film, made according to Hašek's literary work, wanted to avoid communication breakdown and misunderstanding between the film and the viewers, he had to accept the features of the characters drawn by Lada in typology and arrangement of the actor (R. Hrušínský), he had to anticipate (!) the drawn character, and imitate and remind us of it in his film character.

Similarly Karel Zeman in his film adaptation of Verne's *Invention of Destruction* had the possibility to be inspired by the most varied illustrations. At least, if we stay in the Czech context, he could be influenced by Lhoták or Junek, or directly cooperate with one of them who could be the film's scenographer. Zeman's genius, however, consisted in his returning to the old idea of that world, as was presented by French illustrations of the period, which was fixed and accepted by cultural public during the decades that elapsed since the book was written.

But let us return to our theme, to children's book illustration.

This theme is very extensive and easily the subject of various generalizations and simplifying statements. I shall cut it short and will return to the illustrations from my childhood.

I belong to the generation whose childhood passed and passed away during the war. Slniečko (Little Sun), the children's magazine illustrated by Emil Makovický, was shining in my days.

Bred on this aesthetic I confess that many a time I had problems in understanding book illustrations by such artists as Hložník and Fulla.

The expressive character of Hložník's graphic presentation, based on the contrast of black and

white, disturbed me, and I am not yet sure whether this was or is adequate for the children's age and perception. However, this artistic expression remained in my mind and though I did not fully understand and accept it, I remember it. Owing to the fact that it was so close to the literary theme, this artistic expression helped me then, in the years of adolescence to understand similar artistic styles. I guess that this is one of the significant functions and great merits of children's book illustrations in general.

It was different with Fulla. I identified with his quasi folkloric colour artistic expression, and he remained so closely connected with Dobšinský's tales for me that I still cannot imagine them without Fulla's illustrations. I think this concerns not only my generation but also the other...

Ensuing from the background of my own experiences, I would like to point at one circumstance.

The artistic quality of illustration proper is not fundamentally important in understanding the essence of the phenomenon I am concerned with.

To express it more objectively I shall use an example familiar to our foreign colleagues: Saint Exupéry and his *Little Prince*.

My friends, there are many renowned artists and art historians who have tried to convince me on various occasions that Exupéry's illustrations, drawings were amateurish and bad. But no one has drawn better illustrations for the *Little Prince* so far, and that is the rub.

In this case the pictures and the text are so closely connected, that they are "self-sufficient" – they resist stage and film adaptations and they are so resistant that there does not even exist an artistically successful attempt at *Little Prince*'s dramatisation.

American artists from the 'sixties – I mean those around Rauschenberg and then Warhol – came with a specific innovation. They started to reproduce and enlarge comic characters or frag-

ments from scenes. Warhol used Dick Tracey, Popeye or Superman. These artists enlarged into sizes 2x2 m, but I saw also a mural painting, part of the interior of a New York bank, the size of which I would assess at 10x20 m, not even their own, but somebody else's planar, quickly drawn, characters from newspaper serial stories, without artistic standard.

I do not contradict by this those who say that such works originated from lack of invention and for money. I do not mind them, they just add something specific to the areas they cover, and I can imagine quite a great number of Americans who enjoy meeting so unexpectedly their old "pals" from childhood or from the serial story. As you can see, I am democratic in my relation to the artistic quality of illustrations and perhaps too tolerant as far as their artistic standard is concerned.

Personally I do not mind even Mickey Mouse or Donald Duck.

These McDonalds, produced and baked on a conveyor belt in an American standardized artistic kitchen, finally did not come to me from book pages but from the film screen. And I agree that Walter Disney was a genius in how he mastered the presentation of his stories by means of the animated cartoon – on screen.

But if I have had to encounter, if we have had to encounter, if the whole of mankind has had to already for three quarters of a century, encounter these Disney characters and this Disneyesque artistic poetics – let us call it that – in books, on screens, on billboards, on walls and wherever each of us, old or young moves then we should speak of the limitation of personal freedom.

Perhaps it was time to raise our voices in protest against the dulling not only of our personal, but also our public taste.

This way of enforced communication reminds me of those drummers, everybody knows so well, making hellish noise in the subway and you have to walk past them in order to get into the underground.

If such communication contacts are very frequent they can threaten our perception apparatus, make it insensitive and rough. I mean the defect, which causes people to go to discos, to discos with a hundred and more decibels. Frequent visits impair the sensitivity threshold and can lead to total deafness of the visitor in the long run.

Let me be very concise.

Disney's films yes, but for God's sake no Disneyland.

I agree with those of you who have been long pointing out that this is garbage, bad taste, kitsch. Indeed, this is cultural periphery if not something still worse.

Abandoning the themes and skipping from sight to hearing is only apparent. You will immediately see how all this is connected and linked to all that has been said.

We should either praise or blame them. Briefly, owing to the mass media influence we no longer have something to do with the individual, expected or unexpected when meeting a certain duplicate or replica of a certain specific illustration.

Under the influence of huge mass media the functioning awareness of one, single possible correct and adequate performance of a certain, concrete theme is being created.

We can pursue this on an example of a musical theme or song frequently played on radio. We can think that somebody can perform a popular song better than Piaf, but we can only think so. Piaf is a model, a norm, the only possible and generally accepted concretization.

And the same situation arises in the case of Domenico Modugno, or the divine Elvis. Those who perform the same scores, sing the same songs as they, seem to us only as imitators. We perceive them as forgeries of Piaf, Modugno or Presley, but this need not be true at all...

A new tendency appeared hand in hand with the development of mass media, specifically television. Its essence is financial. *Money is the dri-*

ving force, as our colleague James Frazer said yesterday.

Song performers wanted to earn some more money; to improve their reputation by virtue of spreading a work they made up videoclips. If a song, so a song with one performer, in one visual presentation, with one pictorial, usually chaotic and as far as the content of the text, totally irrelevant illustration. Pars pro toto: The Music Channel. The same sound, the same picture, in the morning, at noon, at night, today, tomorrow, forever...

This monetary or, more exactly, commercializing tendency has acquired monstrous dimensions in the current multimedial marketing influx.

It is itself a considerable cultural disaster if somebody – the illustrator? film-maker? – fixes the head of Disney's fallow deer to a dog or to the Lion King after half a century, but it is an aesthetic catastrophe if the same miscarriage called Pocahontas looks at my grand daughter from everywhere, from the school copy book cover, from the satchel, from the T shirt and from the pillow in her bed. Of course it looks not only at my grand daughter, but at many, almost all, grand daughters in the world!

I would like to suggest and recommend from all my heart – but to whom – the advertising and propagation of real works of art, really beautiful children's book illustrations in such a marketing and campaigning way.

Is it possible? Is it not too late?

I am afraid, and I am saying it aloud to you here, that before we managed, more exactly, sooner than you – the organisers, participants and fans of the Biennial – managed to introduce children's illustration into the awareness of world public as an autonomous work of art and did your best for it (and your merits in this respect are great and invaluable) something changed.

The change of approach appeared. Things were converted into money. Not only illustrations

but unfortunately also the artists, masters of book painting and graphic art, without any doubts, for whom the golden BIB apple was the greatest appreciation until recently. Today they do not consider our BIB apple to be a sufficient reward.

Were they tempted to sin by a real gold apple? They want to have as many dollars in their accounts as possible. We can feel and observe something like that at this year's Biennial.

I think that you know what I am speaking about.

Here all the theories end.

Grey theories, aesthetic theories, mass medial and all other ones.

I am afraid that not even tears could help us. Perhaps we should pray for a miracle that would put beauty, artistic beauty for children on the pedestal it duly belongs to.

I said that we have not managed to introduce illustration as an autonomous work of art into the awareness of cultural public. I was concerned at the very simple fact that the public has not yet learned how such a work originated. They have not yet learned what sort of art and craft it is – I mean the procedure by which a graphic work is made – woodcut, lithograph, dry point...

Albín Brunovský once told me about a foreigner, by coincidence an American, who once visited him and asked him to show him that special instrument by which he makes his pictures. I think this is a very vivid example of illustration.

Albín invited him to his studio, set up a large magnifying glass and made a few points on the unfinished picture. "You are not normal, you are crazy", the astounded man screamed.

Albín Brunovský ...

Güner Ener

The Illustrator in His Relationship to Today's Conditions of Life

In the letter sent by BIB Secretariat the topic of the 1997 Symposium was explained clearly. I was a little relieved to think that the serious, threatening situation we are in was at last on the agenda. And a question about the reason was placed in front of us: "Which impact at the illustrated children's books does make the influence of the world so much overtechnologized? What is the impact on the children?" And we were supposed "to make a statement to the questions of the determination these problems to the quality of illustrator's creation and the relationship with the publishing institutions."

The first remark from me will be just Ooops!

The first time I participated in BIB was in 1979. Since then I have back every second year until 1989. In that period the world had kept on changing in a reasonable speed. But after 1989 it started such a speed that I feel simply dizzy. In 1979 – 1989 period I have been full of emotions, like all my colleagues here; we believed that we could create a world through our work, a world of quality, aesthetic and hope. I have changed by time, my country has changed, nearly the whole world has changed in an unbelievable way. Now the dominating power is money in this strange world, why to deny it? Greediness, ugliness and even cruelty are ruling the most of the brains. There are some and quite few privileged countries in which the life is running rather smoothly. But their exist-

tence cannot change the reality of other countries.

Please don't accuse me being too bitter and pessimistic I am coming from a country full of problems, and I see no-way-out in the near future. Actually we imported most of the problems, and some dirt and danger, now we are harvesting them.

I watch TV, I go to the cinemas, I look at the magazines and the comics-books. 90% of all is full of ugliness, horror, brutality, destruction, perversion and blood. There are some TV series in which even the domestic animals are shown us bloody killers and monsters. So no possibility is left for us to love even them. I wonder what the producers of all these things aim at? Are they trying to create a world made of hatred, blood and ugliness? I am seriously anxious about the tomorrow's world, about the young generations who are raised under the influence of all these products.

It seems to me that producers of that frightening kind are only interested in making more money, playing and provoking the wild instincts of the human kind; apart from the culture, they are not interested even in technology itself. We imported and are importing this dangerous stuff and we also started to produce similar things. They are the once dominating the market now. And horror or terror is sneaking in almost every

house in my country. This is one side of the story.

The other side is economical. In a country with 65 millions of population there are 20 millions of children who should be potential readers. Cut of 20, 7 millions are in primary, 4 690 000 are in lower secondary schools and 2 638 000 are in lices. A total of 14 millions 328 000; it means nearly 6 millions are out of schools and some of them are in kindergardens. In 1994 in Turkey, 70 publishing houses catablished an organizations of the publication for children, I am sure that they are doing their best, publishing books every for the children at the age between 2-12. But what about selling them?

The minimum salary for workers is around 110 dollars a monthly in my country. And approximately 70 % of the whole population is on that level, 20% is extremely rich and 10% can be accepted as middle class. If the books for children cost between 1-10 dollars and if one can by 5 loafs of bread with the money for the cheapest book, how many families will be willing to buy books for their children? There are families witch consume 10 or more loafs of bread a day it means they spend a little more than 2 dollars for bread each day and they earn only 200 dollars a month which is a total of the two salaries of mother and father. They would never dream of buying books, that is the simple fact. They can hardly afford the school-books already. So, who is buying the books? Maybe 10% of the whole children's population, maybe less. What about the rest?

There are so many countries having the similar conditions of even worse. In all these countries it is impossible for the majority of the children to reach to the beautifully illustrated books of quality which can entertain and teach them at the same time. But they can reach easily to all those horryfying products at home or just sitting in a common place like coffee-houses, while drinking one cup of tea and watching TV screen, or visiting a movie-house from time to time or buying cheap comics-books. They turn be a kind of unerasable

education at the end. The result is the same of those who can afford overtechnologized devices at home. They lose their interest for the books. Because there is something easier, cheaper, something also tickling their facies. Through this unerasable educations most of the concepts in their minds change in a dangerous way, blurred or turned upside-down. They develop a shallow, superficial, insensitive and even aggressive personality, as the brutality, destruction, egoism takes over the reigh in their minds. Money turns to be God in such a collapsing structure. That is all they are taught. Overtechnologized education in schools has also similar danger, taking the children away from the books, creating a habit of easiness and laziness to read books.

I dont't remember exactly when it was, maybe 1987 or 1989, a young colleague from Japan pointed out the danger of cheap comics-books and TV products and alike. In this speech he explained clearly how hard it was to struggle against them. At that time, I think, none of us thought that the danger would be so great.

Not only the countries with economical problems or the countries troubled by war or conflicts, or third-world countries face and suffer that danger, but the rich and developed countries have to face it even in greater dimensions. In 1994 a book for children written by a Turkish author was translated and published in USA. The same year the book was elected by The Librarians Association of USA as "The best Foreign Book of the Year 1994", and got "The Batchelder Award" given by the Minnesota University, had plenty of rewievs in the periodical and newspapers with a big applaud and praise – even one of them was recommending the book for schools to read-aloud in classes because of the poetry of the style and the translation –. This book could manage to sell only around two thousand copies, while the horrible comics-books sell millions of copies.

I had mentioned shortly the economical situation of the majority of children in my country.

There are some more hinderances which arose during last ten years for a group of children, prohibiting them to enjoy their childhood or youth. Actually we imported that too. Under these conditions the publisher avoids the risk of losing money, investing only in cheap products. The royalty of the illustrator and the author of the children's books are very low. Well-known writers and illustrators of the adult literature try once or twice, as a kind of gesture, to write or to illustrate for children, then they give up. So, only the second or third or I don't know which class of artists can go on, or quite rich ones enjoy illustrating just as a hobby. The quality of the paper and the print of the children's books are not the best of course. What do you expect then as a result, a miracle?

Yes I see no-way-out unless the state has a pure and strict cultural, educational and media policy, unless there is a chain of children's libra-

ries established and controlled by the state and cared by the municipalities, reaching to the remotest corners of specially underdeveloped or problem countries. If we can't wait provide such a system which protects and helps the children, we can't wait anything sound from the future of our world.

We, who gather and discuss the problems from time to time, who do our career all our lives, remind me of a figure sitting by the sea, using a sea-shell trying patiently, hopefully to empty the sea. The cruel sea is there, just in front of us, with all its power, factories, machinery, studios, experts, etc. We can't fight against it, without the help of the state. We must call all civil organizations to support us to put a pressure on the state do change all those threatening conditions. I think now it is time to start a campaign to save not only the nature but our children, before it is too late.

T. B. van der Walt

Publishing Children's books in a multicultural and multilingual society: a discussion of selected South African picture books

This will be a joint presentation by me and Dr. Felicité Fairer-Wessels, of the Unit for Research in Children's Literature, Department of Information Science of the University of South Africa.

The first section will deal with the publishing of children's books in South Africa in general and specifically the current situation and how it came about.

The second, which Dr. Fairer-Wessels will present, will deal with children's book illustrations.

When one talks about the publishing of books for South African children – and especially the development of publishing of South African children's book – one has to refer to the different languages that are spoken in the country. The publishing of books for children in the different languages developed in different ways.

Since same change of the country, South Africa has had eleven official languages. Except for the two European languages, Afrikaans and English, there are also nine African languages. These languages, just like other African languages, have found their written form in relatively recent times. It should therefore be obvious that children's literature in the different languages did not develop in the same way.

A rich tradition of English and Afrikaans children's books exists, but as is the case in the rest of Africa, relatively few children's book in the

African languages are published and are available for children.

As I have said, these languages developed fairly recently into written forms. Some of them still have a rich tradition of oral literature, but reading for recreational purposes is in general still something foreign to the black community of South Africa. This is evident when one looks at the use that is made of libraries. In most cases libraries are used for the purpose of formal and informal education but not for recreation. Because there is not such a big demand for recreational reading matter, few fiction books are written for children.

However, there is a demand for books that be used for educational purposes. Because a core collection of original African children's literature did not exist and because of this demand for extra-curricular reading matter, publishers started to produce translated books in the African languages. As a matter of fact, with the exception of school readers, books for children in the African languages mainly consist of translations. This was an attempt to meet the educational reading requirements of black children and probably also to capture the market of public libraries who wanted to do the politically correct thing and include children's books in the African languages.

Whatever the reason, attempts were made to produce books in the African languages. This

was done in the same way as was the case with Afrikaans children's books in the 1950's, namely by means of translations and children's book awards.

These attempts had very limited success. First of all, there was a lot of criticism from black academics and educators against the translations. Translations are, of course, never an adequate substitute for books written by mother tongue speakers. Books are written with cultural undertones and foreign values incomprehensible to the young reader. Translations often lacked synonyms in the African languages and as a result new terms were created which might have carried quite a different meaning.

On the other hand, very few mother tongue speakers write in their own languages. There is, however, a more important reason: it has become clear that black language groups in South Africa do not care for mother tongue education. Most black parents and educators prefer black children to be taught in English as it prepares them for international competition and communication. The black population of South Africa has opted for English to be used as the medium of instruction from the third year of schooling.

If there is no need for books in the indigenous African languages, what do the publishers of children's books publish nowadays in South Africa?

More and more English books are published, and specifically books that are suitable for second language speakers. Although the number of people who speak English as their home language is relatively small, English, as mentioned, is becoming more and more important as an educational language. There is therefore quite a big market for children's books in English.

If one at the contents of South African children's books of last few years, the multicultural background of the society is very evident. Authors, illustrators and publishers try to portray South Africa as one large multicultural country

with people mixing freely – which is of course a little bit contrived. Various publishers deliberately focus on publishing books with a typical African background aimed at all the children of the country – books that will introduce, them to each others culture. Maskew-Miller Longman Publishers, for instance, publish a series of very challenging and well-written books in their Young Africa series.

For very long this was not the case we were used to books where each author's writing was based on the part of South Africa best known to him or her – and which might be unknown to his or her racial counterparts. Race and ethnicity are part of everybody's frame of reference in South Africa because of racial separation. In the past residential and educational apartheid rendered it almost impossible for authors to create realistic stories with interracial social interaction at home, in schools and cities. Authors had to place the characters in a rural setting, mostly on a farm or in the wilds, where characters could interact outdoors and where there were fewer restrictions.

What are the problems facing publishers of children's books in South Africa?

The economic recession which came about as a result of the international boycott of South Africa. The country has a new government but the economy has not improved since then. There are many reasons and the most important one is probably that the promised inflow of foreign investments has not materialised. One cannot blame foreign governments: low productivity and the unacceptably high crime rate and corruption in government circles do not make the country a country to invest in.

This recession, of course also effect the sale and publishing of children's books. Children's books have become expensive and the sales have dropped accordingly. That again led to smaller print runs and bigger unit costs – a vicious circle. Because of the small demand publishers find dif-

difficult to compete with the quality books published overseas.

Less than 5% of our population buys children's books. Because of the weak currency, prices of overseas books have escalated – and there is the unfortunate additional import tax. Prices of locally produced books have also gone up. Print runs are small and paper has become expensive. The small market has made publishers very dependent on education departments, hoping to get their books prescribed and taking into account the political and social attitudes which for very long prevailed in the country, publishers in general have been careful to publish only safe, uncontentious books.

As a result of the small market few original books in full colour illustrations are published nowadays. In the past the simultaneous publication of books in several of the indigenous languages was often the only way of making publication possible. Although there was never really a big demand for these books, libraries bought them. These books stood unused on library shelves and unfortunate reality that there was no demand for the books had the result that few publishers still publish in the African languages – smaller print runs of picture books.

One of the most important publishers of picture books in the past, Human & Rousseau, nowadays seldom publishes more than one picture book per year – and then always simultaneously in Afrikaans and English. The publisher told me categorically that the market for books in the African languages is dead.

Co-productions with overseas publishers is the only option left for publishers. The problem with this is, however, that all publishers want to publish books with which the children of that country can identify. European and American publishers are in general not interested in South

Africa children's books because our books, according to them, are too specifically African. This is self-evident: of course, our publishers are trying to produce books that will appeal to our children.

Overseas publishers also say that South African children's books are not sophisticated enough. In this case, our publishers have to cope with the problem that research indicates that black children (the market at which the publication of children's books are aimed) prefer realistic and unsophisticated illustrations.

From time to time a publisher and illustrator is lucky enough to produce a book with universal appeal. One such book, published recently by Human & Rousseau Publishers, is *"The Dancer"* which deals with the San folklore and is illustrated by Niki Daly in style of the San rock paintings. This book is typically African but has also universal appeal and was copublished with a Danish publisher.

According to some publishers the multicultural issue is something of the past in South Africa. Black children are not interested in books that deal specifically with black children. They are not interested in stories about nature and with an African background. They like the same type of stories that white children like to read: series like *Sweet Valley High*. What we are looking for black children written by black authors – books with which they can identify – even though the books are not written in their mother tongue.

The future for publishers lies in the educational market. Few original picture books are likely to be published in future. The general list of publishers are getting smaller and smaller. One can expect that still more books in English for second language speakers will be published and also books that are explicitly African centred and very clearly not European centred.

F. A. Fairer-Wessels

Publishing Children's books in a multicultural and multilingual society: a discussion of selected South African picture books

In this section of the paper I will discuss certain trends in South African children's books and will specifically focus on two global themes that have manifested themselves in South African picture books, namely, ecology and the grandparent, particularly the black grandmother, within the South African context.

A brief background to South African children's book illustrations:

Before I discuss these themes I would like to make some general remarks about South African children's book illustrations. In the early years a notion originated in South Africa that serious authors or illustrators did not illustrate children's book. Many of these early books contain black and white illustrations revealing a total lack of basic drawing techniques, which is also the case in the few examples of English children's book that were created.

South African have a fairly academic approach, often with the obvious an creative use of line. This is likely the result of an industry that dictated the use of only one or two colour illustrations by illustrators, limiting their creativity. A line drawing is often the most economical way to convey an idea in visual form, which brings us to the issue of visual literacy.

South African illustrations in general do not reflect the use of sophisticated techniques or styles and are kept rather realistic and simple, mainly because black children and adults have impaired visual literacy. This largely being the result of the black people's oral culture that discourages reading. These people have not exposed to literature in a written form to the same extent as their Western counterparts, which obviously affects their ability to understand and interpret illustrations. The African culture is also a very adult-centred culture they have produced very few illustrations for children's books. This problem, however, may be addressed by using illustrations done by black children themselves (refer to Animal Alphabet Book). To the contrary, English and Afrikaans mother tongue speakers are traditionally readers and have a strong reading culture and are visually literate. In a multicultural context illustrations in a picture book can also hold various languages together (refer to Animal Alphabet Book as an example).

Multiculturalism and multilingualism:

In my discussion of the various book I will briefly indicate the multicultural elements that are evident. As we are aware various definitions of multiculturalism exist. Many authors view multiculturalism as the attempt to make all cultures the

same so that everything may be universal. This implies that unique cultural roots should make way for a collective multicultural heritage, which would ultimately result in a global multicultural, but with people not having identifying cultural roots. We, however, follow the premise that all cultures must retain their unique characteristics ethnicity, but must be flexible to function effectively in a multicultural world order. Children must be exposed to various cultures in order to develop a respectful knowledge of them, but in the same instance they must have access to books that are true reflections of their own culture.

In the same instance, multilingualism implies the movement towards a unified lingua franca. In South Africa this is English, and publishers have attempted to address this issue of multi-languages (we have 11 official languages) by using one set of so-called multicultural illustrations which used with different language texts.

Discussion of the selected picture books:

I will now discuss the two themes initially mentioned the representation of the (black) grandmother as the first theme, and then the ecological theme or "green issue" in South African children's books by referring to selected books and by visually presenting some of the illustrations to you by means of slides.

Representation of the grandmother figures:

I will now focus on the representation of the black grandmother in South African children's books, as I feel this very topical and unique theme within the South African context. For the past two decades there has been a global proliferation of children's books with themes of grandparents (Schwarz). This forms part of a larger global trend of the ageing of society and the increased acceptance of it. Within the South African society, particularly within the black commu-

nity, the role of the grandmother has always been significant, forming in most cases the nucleus of the extended family, with the parents of the children absent from home as the breadwinners in the cities due to economic reasons. In local South African children's books, the black grandmother is always portrayed in a loving, supportive role as a warm and generous individual. One who is always there, especially for her grandchildren. She is the main care-giver and educator through their years of childhood.

The following books were written for the black market, but are ironically mainly read by white children. They, however, portray the black grandmother as a positive and eternal figure.

"Not so fast Songololo" is a realistically illustrated picture book and depicts the loving relationship between a black grandmother and her grandson against a socio-economically deprived background. In the story, Malusi (called Songololo by his grandmother) is the young protagonist who must take his beloved Gogo to the big city (the publishers have used the term "Gogo" which means Granny in the Zulu language in an attempt to be multicultural, and although white children accept Gogo as universal, many other black languages do not, which in actual fact causes book to fail multilingually as it disempowers the black people who do not know the term). Gogo who has always been Malusi's educator gladly accepts him as her guide in the urban jungle. The illustrations are strongly rooted in the South African urban situation with full buses and pavements. Malusi, however, is streetwise and teaches Gogo the different types of passing cars and leads her across a busy street, holding her hand and helping her, always staying close and moving at her pace. Gogo eventually buys Malusi a pair of new red-and-white shoes to thank him for his assistance and his excitement is clearly illustrated where he enthusiastically starts walking faster – from where the title: Not so fast Songololo, comes.

This is a simple but universal tale of love and attempts to cross cultural and language barriers, as this book was published in a number of black, as well as in English and Afrikaans, using the same set of illustrations.

"*The dove*" is a picture book illustrated with a degree of primitivism. It represents an underprivileged socio-economic group and gives a realistic view of the hardship of rural blacks. The story is about a grandmother in a supportive role and her granddaughter, who later assists her, as in "*Not so fast Songololo*". They lose their crops in a flood likened to Noah's great flood in Biblical times – and the dove plays a central role as a symbol of hope and peace for the survivors of the flood. This dove, however, is man-made of material and beads by Lindi and her grandmother, and is sold to a tourist shop. The money they get enables them to make many more doves which improves their economic position and puts them in control of their destiny, and not exposed to the elements of nature. The subtext clearly indicates that it is not only difficult to make a living from agriculture, but that uneducated farming practices can erode the land and cause ecological disaster. It is clear that one must rather leave nature to its own forces and be more creative by exploring the tourist market. This book is also successful multiculturally as it depicts the child, Lindi, as representative of socio-economically deprived children across the world.

"*The dove*" is a positive representation of how ingenuity and perseverance can improve one's life. It is interesting to note that the illustration after the flood portrays the grandmother at the table stringing beads, while Lindi sits on a chest on the floor reading a book – this is uncharacteristic behaviour for rural black person, but indicates the importance of education.

"*Hier is ek*" is a carefully illustrated picture book in a decorative semi-naïve style, and is the depiction of a universal theme of the love of a grandmother for her new granddaughter. The

illustrations represent an originality not previously encountered in depicting the multicultural layers of our society – namely the feisty (white, in this case) grandmother who takes on Africa, the savage continent – she travels by ostrich with a wild boar, meerkat, and red-billed hornbills (depicting the preservation of wildlife), "Livingstone" and entourage (depicting imperialist Britain), and a black terrorist in camouflage in the bushes (depicting the liberation of Africa from colonialists), she also travels by giraffe with various wildlife and a film set from "Out of Africa" in the foreground depicting, in this instance, the cultural imperialism of the United States. On each double page black guardian angels in designer outfits hover.

The multicultural aspects depicted in each illustration are subtle and entertaining and their remarkable detail appeal to young and old. Many aspects are meant for the adult audience, like, for example, Livingstone, the black liberation fighter, the film set and the preservation of wildlife. The subtext also conveys an ecological message of how one can live in harmony with nature and learn from it. Each illustration is humorous and bordered by an authentic African frame of animal skin or footprints.

"*Hi Zoleka*" – is illustrated in a free realistic style with a lack of facial individuality, and the story represents the universal hopes and fears of child, supported by a maternal figure.

"*Mondi, the flute player*" – is boldly illustrated in realistic style with Matisse-like paper-cut doves on every other page giving it an esoteric and dreamlike quality.

This book also falls into the category of the maternal figure in a supportive role, although this is not the main theme. The overriding theme is rather the hopes and aspirations of a socio-economically deprived young cripple boy who overcomes hardship and develops his own identity by playing his beloved flute.

"*Mama Mabena's magic*" – is brightly illustrated in a semi-realistic style with little depth, and is

a simple tale of how an old material figure of a rural village teaches two young girls to paint with confidence in the traditional art form of the Ndebele tribe. This gives the girls pride in their own culture which has been denigrated during the apartheid era.

Ecological theme:

The other universal theme now receiving attention in South Africa children's books, is the ecological or so-called "green issue".

The books I will briefly discuss are *"The Quagga's secret"*, *"The Animal alphabet"* and *"The joining"*.

"Animal Alphabet" is a multicultural and multilingual picture book boldly illustrated by South African children. Animals as a theme are used to depict the alphabet which is a means of avoiding cultural issues. The book aims to be multilingual as each animal is named in each of the official South African languages. The question remains: whose alphabet is it? This book attempts to present an ecological theme by depicting the importance of the preservation of wild animals.

"The Quagga's secret" deals with an extinct horse-like animal and book is illustrated in a realistic style in the bold earthy colours of ochre and terracotta, depicting the dry harsh landscape against which the folk-tale is told. The Quagga is the sole survivor of the species and the hero of the tale, with a male San (Bushman) as his ally also mimicking the ostrich. The subtext accurately portrays the San (Bushman) as a particular ethnic group people which is also virtually extinct, with about 20 persons still alive today. The white hunter symbolises the destruction of nature and he kills the Quagga, but is visually portrayed as mourning a loved one once he realises his terrible deed. The tale and illustrations evoke an emotional response for the loss of an exceptional animal. This book depicts a strong ecological issue

of the preservation of species and aims to educate children about the value of nature and her animals.

The next book I am going to discuss briefly is a young adult book that aims to educate juveniles to become environmentally aware. The book entitled *"The joining"* is a time warp story. A group of children are on a camp held by the Environment Club, go back thousands of years in time to join a group of San (Xan) people. Jeremy, Phumzile, Sitheli and Christina are from three different cultures and they learn about the life of the San by travelling with them. Uub (Oob) is a grandmother figure, a little Bushman woman who acts as a surrogate mother, especially in the beginning when they are feeling very strange. They are introduced to the San's rock paintings which are accurate and authentically reproduced in the book at the end of each chapter. Each rock painting is known as a "joining" (from the title of the book) – a "joining" joins the San to their ancestors. Jeremy comes to understand how the San, who inhabited Southern Africa at least 100 000 years ago, lived in harmony with their environment – unlike modern man. He also learns that no matter in which epoch one lives or from which culture one comes – "we are all people". We need to make a joining, that is a spiritual and physical bonding of man and nature, a harmonious coming together, a total acceptance of all men by all men, a reunion of cultures. This slide depicts a hunter-gatherer group of four people: of two men, with the big younger virile man as a hunter with his bow and arrows on his back and a weapon in his hand, and the other man, an older impotent one carrying wood on his back; one woman of childbearing age a gatherer and a child. The next slide depicts 7 women – 3 older ones in the middle, with the younger ones with fuller breasts on the outside. This rock art has been dated to over 27,000 years ago, placing it among the oldest known art created by humankind.

The actual story thus questions whether we should not be wondering whether, in our age of technological marvels, our children are better off than the children of the San? Do they face a better future?

The book is multicultural as its four main protagonists are of mixed blood from different cultures. The characters are all truly multicultural and learn so much about the harmonious lifestyle of the San that they all decide to return to the time warp of this bygone age. This is a gripping tale questioning the meaning of modern day life and allows reader to wish that he too had a choice to return the time of the San.

Conclusion:

We are living in a multicultural and multilingual country. On the one hand, very interesting cross cultural influences arise from this as can be seen in the fields of literature and the fine arts. On

the other hand, such a conglomeration of nations living in close proximity to one another can result in intense friction.

The one thing that can bridge the gap between these diversified population groups is children's books of high quality. Books are essential for the development of the child as a whole: intellectually, psychologically, emotionally, morally, socially and aesthetically. We, the people, that are interested in children's literature, truly believe in the power of word, and, therefore, believe that children's book can help with the creation of a unified South African society.

South African children's literature is on the threshold of a golden age, and if the high level of illiteracy can be eradicated with the equalising of education for all children, and if there can be true equality of all the official languages, the multicultural and multilingual composition of the South African nation contribute to a rich indigenous South African children's literature.