

## **Interview with Louise Lockhart**

### **Would you like to introduce yourself?**

I am an illustrator living in an old mill in a small town in England. Inspired by everyday life around me, I love to draw animals, plants, people and shops. I spend my days creating designs from little paper cut outs, making colourful pictures that are rich with humour and narrative. I have made many children's books and also apply my illustrations to printed products which I sell in my online shop The Printed Peanut.

### **How would you describe your style in three words?**

Colourful, vintage-inspired, joyful

### **In which subject areas are you specialized in your illustrations?**

I love to draw everyday things that seem to be slowly disappearing from the world, like printed cinema tickets or hand painted signs on shops. I'm inspired by 'normal' everyday life and love to watch people go about their business. I have drawn a lot of food and made designs for food packaging, which is something I love to do.

### **Are there specific features to consider in making a non-fiction book?**

This book was a gift because the facts to illustrate are so rich and descriptive and interesting! I always like to try to get humour into my work so my challenge is to depict the information in the best and most funny way. I always use a limited colour palette so it can be tricky when you have to draw something like a rainbow, for example, but I only have say blue, grey and orange to work with. Each chapter has a different colour palette which ties it all together. I love the overall look of a more restricted colour palette as it makes it look as if it has been printed by hand (even though it is done digitally).

### **Can you give us an insight into your collaboration with Jane Wilsher? Did you conceive the book together?**

As the illustrator, I am just given the finished text so I haven't had any contact with Jane, I'm not even sure what she thinks of my illustrations! It must be funny seeing someone else interpret them. I have done this book as a follow on from the English language book The Dictionary of Difficult Words, so it is like a sequel really.

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**What is your favourite question in the book? What did you like best illustrating?**

I loved to draw “Which Russian Empress hired a herd of cats” because I would definitely want to live in a cat palace!

**What challenges did you have in realising so many different motifs without a narrative framework?**

Each fact was given to me in a list so I just methodically worked my way through one by one. I made all of the illustrations during the lockdown and it was a great distraction, to have so much work ahead of me. I really enjoyed it! I just wish I had the memory to remember facts...