

Why a Crocodile?

by

Chris Harrendence



MA Contemporary Dialogues

Confirmative Praxis

Word count: 5374

Contents

Introduction	Page 3
Chapter 1	
<i>In which we are introduced to the child, a Crocodile, a flying machine and the stories begin</i>	Page 7
<i>The Child</i>	Page 8
<i>The Crocodile</i>	Page 12
<i>The Machine</i>	Page 15
Chapter 2	
<i>The Endless Picture Book</i>	Page 21
<i>The Acquiring and collecting of 'Things'</i>	Page 22
Conclusion	Page 26
List of images	Page 27
Reference	Page 28
Bibliography	Page 29

Memory is like a slippery fish. We can often see memories in the shallows, and sometimes grasp hold of them, but over time they may slip away. Using narrative illustration as a tool, I 'hook' these memories to document an autobiographical journey of youth. The memory of a first painting and a first visit to an art gallery act as catalysts in the underlying theme of the work. The psychology of nostalgia is explored to understand my own practice as an illustrator as well as how the past can influence creativity and storytelling. Why do we put so much emotional significance in an evocative object? A smell, a touch or a sound can instantly transport us in a Proustian rush to ephemeral moments of our past.

The exploration into childhood memory and nostalgia can be a rather self-indulgent exercise. My previous attempts to illustrate my story have always gone down an overindulgent sinkhole of melancholy.



Fig.1, *Billy Goat* 1998



Fig. 2, *Living with Ned* 2017

There is an inevitability that looking into the loneliness of childhood will churn up a soup of sadness, yet in my years (at time of writing) that are dangerously approaching my fifties, I look back with more fondness and a yearning for that childhood. Nostalgia strikes again. Chocolate bars were bigger, music was better, and the summers were longer. Let me just adjust my rose-tinted glasses.

'Nostalgia is a fleeting experience, a few short moments or maybe a night of reminiscing among friends. It works its restorative or melancholy magic and moves on.'

(Berry, p.23)

This journey is more than a trip down memory lane. This is a culmination of experiences that have shaped me as an illustrator and should be celebrated as such.

Why a crocodile? I have been frequently asked while working on my Confirmative Praxis. This seems like an appropriate question/title for a report. I have toyed with the idea of other titles, such as *The Solitary Child*, *The Anthropomorphic Metaphor* or perhaps the lengthy *The representation of the companion in childhood literature and picture books*. However. I keep coming back to Why a crocodile?

When I began this research, a journey that eventually becomes that of memory and childhood, I was struggling with how I could move forward. I had a seed

of an idea lurking in the creative depths, but I was not certain how it could be germinated. Through early explorative research it was determined that whatever the solution, the outcome was going to be sculptural in form. This body of work has moved a long way from its early concept of The Theatre of the Mind; the idea was that of a three-dimensional immersive experience which gave the observer an insight into the mind of the artist, and what makes him tick.



Fig. 3, *Sketchbook 2024-2025*

This was not, on the surface, directly linked to my childhood or memories and yet, scratch the surface and the core of my creative endeavours lead squarely back to moments of my past. It was here, in my past, the question of why a crocodile? can begin to be answered.

There are two significant moments from my childhood that have had, if not a profound effect, certainly a lasting effect on me as a creative. For almost anything to stick in our head for any length of time, there has to be a reasonably strong emotional experience attached to it (Berry, P.26). During the early 1980s, around the time when I was five or six years old, my mother took me to an exhibition at Swansea's Glyn Vivian art gallery. I will never know my mother's motivation or reason for this visit. It was not something we had done before and never did again. I had to wait until I was a student during the 1990s until I stepped foot in a gallery

again. However, this first childhood visit remains a core memory for me. On entering the main doors of the gallery, I was confronted by a mechanical marvel that was suspended from the ceiling. A flying automaton made of mannequin parts and bicycle wheels, gears and chains which rotated above us. Although a core memory, the details are slightly out of reach. This initial first encounter with art has been the main driving force of this body of work throughout my MA. My goal was to create a piece of artwork (whatever it should be) that would be seen by a 6-year-old child and have a lasting impact on them.



Fig. 4, *Crocodile- The Gallery Visit*

This leads onto my second strong memory moment. Around the same time, I had my first awareness not just of the enjoyment of drawing and creating but the possibility that I was not too bad at drawing and creating, at least certainly taking a pride in the process. It was one afternoon in school, and I had been given a large piece of paper and pots of poster paint. I remember very little about what we had been asked to do but I just started painting. As the paint brush moved across the paper, so the crocodile emerged. It was cut out and added to a wall with animals the rest of the class produced. The display was in the dining hall and each afternoon I would sit and look at the painting. My painting. I was so proud of that crocodile. It is a

pride I still feel each time I complete any artwork, whether a personal project or a piece for a client.



Fig.5, *Crocodile-The Painting*

Chapter One:

In which we are introduced to the child, a Crocodile, a flying machine and the stories begin

I have taken the liberty of borrowing A.A.Milne's chapter heading structure from his first Winnie-the-Pooh story, Chapter 1, In which we are introduced to Winnie-the-Pooh and some bees, and the stories begin (Milne. 1928, p.11). It is a good place to start my beginning. More accurately my creative beginning. I must go back to my early childhood to make sense of this journey and how my memories have directly impacted the outcomes of this master's degree. As previously reflected upon, I have made many attempts at illustrating a picture-book that deals with childhood and they have often gone down the route of loneliness, bullying, childhood grief and depression. I did not want this body of work to focus on childhood trauma. These are areas that certainly need to be open for discussion within the realm of children's picture books. They can be considered the ideal 'safe space' that these

topics can and should be explored. However, my attempts to deal with these challenging topics would often result with becoming emotionally fatigued or often producing contrived illustrative work. I wanted to produce work that would celebrate childhood, a body of work that could be playful, surreal and silly but also reflective.

The Child

‘Once upon a time, a very long time ago now, about last Friday, Winnie-the-Pooh lived in a forest all by himself’ Milne

The primary objective of this body of work has always been to create a physical and kinetic representation of my illustrative language; a crocodile. There was also a need to celebrate and elevate the inner child. As children we must navigate an uncertain world and would often have to ‘figure out’ things for ourselves. This would involve the creation of fantasy worlds and imaginary friends. It is a coping mechanism to navigate the turbulent seas of life. When receiving his Caldecott award for his book *Where the Wild Things Are*, Maurice Sendak talked about how his book was a homage to the children in the area where he grew up and ‘the intensity of their daily play’ (Cech, 2014 p.104).

They are the necessary games children must conjure up to combat an awful fact of childhood: the fact of their vulnerability to fear, anger, hate, frustration- all the emotions that are an ordinary part of their lives and that they can perceive only as ungovernable and dangerous forces. To master these forces, children turn to fantasy: that imagined world where disturbing emotional situations are solved to their satisfaction. Through fantasy, Max, the hero of my book, discharges his anger against his mother, and returns to the real world sleepy, hungry, and at peace with himself.

(Sendak.1988 p.151)

When looking back at our childhoods we are reflecting upon the time with an adult mind. We may have forgotten how we really felt at the time. When reflecting on the amount of time spent alone, it would be easy to fall into the trap of thinking that I was alone as a child therefore I was lonely. These are thoughts I believed to be true for myself. On reflection, although partially true, there are many moments that I found solitude to be preferable. Loneliness expresses the pain of being lonely and

solitude is the glory of being alone (Abate. 2019 P491). This realisation has been instrumental in moving my illustrative narrative away from the melancholy to a more playful landscape. In hindsight, it was those moments of solitude that gave me the space to imagine, create and play. Spending time alone and away from others has also long been argued by philosophers, authors and poets to be necessary for imaginative, creative and artistic enterprises (Coplan and Bowker, 2021p60). Throughout Children's literature there are stories peppered with that of a solitary child who are often accompanied by a companion or friend-imaginary or otherwise (most often of in anthropomorphic form). This friend can be imaginary, a pet or a toy that, in their mind, comes to life. What role do these companions serve?

The relationship between a boy and his toy bear are captured in A.A. Milne's literary works. The remarkable thing about Milne's whimsical tales of Christopher Robin and Winnie-the-Pooh is that they were written about a real boy and his toy bear, whose adventure havens are preserved in the folds of East Sussex just south of London's sprawl (Wallace. 1996 p62). Christopher-Robin and Winnie-the-Pooh have been immortalised through books, films and merchandise for now over hundred years. Milne created these stories around his son, drawing inspiration from the games that Christopher played. The way that the stories are written are conversational in places. Often Christopher Robin interjects during the author's telling of the story or Winnie-the-Pooh will ask a question about the narrative.



Fig. 6 Christopher-Robin' E.H.Shepard, 1925

The adventures that took place in Milne's fictional world of The Hundred Acre Wood has delighted children for a century. A place detached from time and place, the wood acts as a neutral ground, a safe space that is not influenced by the ravages of adult problems. Here (the fictional) Christopher Robin is the adult, he is the responsible one who acts as mentor and guide to the silly old bear. E.H. Shepard's illustrations capture the sense of innocence with his use of pen and ink drawings and water colour washes. There is something timeless in the Milne and Shepard's Hundred Acre Wood. This timelessness is the reason that these stories about a bear and his boy have endured for a century.

The real-life story of Christopher Robin and his relationship with his father (and bear) turned to resentment as he grew up. Few people have to cope with their childhood games and fantasies being turned into an open book; little wonder that Milne spent part of his adult life bitter at the curse (Wallace. 1996 p62).

The successful, long running comic strip Calvin and Hobbes, by Bill Watterson, focuses on the adventures of a boy (Calvin) and his tiger (Hobbes).

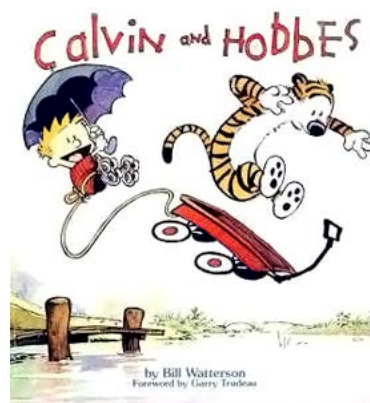


Fig.7 *Calvin and Hobbes* , Bill Watterson, 1985

Hobbes the tiger, in this instance (like Winnie-the Pooh) is a stuffed toy animal and is seen as such by everyone else in the comic strip. However, to the eyes of Calvin, it is a very real and life size tiger. As with Milne's Winnie-the-Pooh, where the adventures occur with a limited ensemble of Christopher-Robin's stuffed toys, here too there is very little engagement with other characters in the narratives of the comic strips. Much of the action and storytelling focuses on the interaction between the two titular characters. One could make the case that all the time Calvin spends with Hobbes, he is actually spending time by himself. Calvin's best friend is an

imaginary one (Abate.2019 p494). Watterson's Calvin is an inventive and independent child who cherishes his solitude. It is in this the state of solitude that Calvin can create his playful worlds of monsters, aliens and space adventures while still being quite deep and often engaging in philosophical conversations with Hobbes, exploring areas of religion, ethics and even the meaning of life (Abate,2019 p.489). Unlike Christopher-Robin who acts as a guide and a voice of reason for Winnie-the-Pooh, here it could be argued that the roles are almost reversed. Alternatively, they could be considered equals. Hobbes is often the wiser of the pair, a confidant and adviser. Hobbes listens and takes on board Calvin's worries about the world. Apart from the humorous nature that these comic strips follow, there is something deeper and meaningful that Watterson is sharing with us about solitude and childhood. The best times that Calvin experiences are times that he spends alone (Abate.2019 p.489). I find this very relatable to my own childhood. Some of the best games I played were often when I was alone. Through play I was creating worlds and stories to fill those spaces. It is what I am still doing now as an illustrator.

The Crocodile

'As the paint brush moved across the paper, so the crocodile emerged'

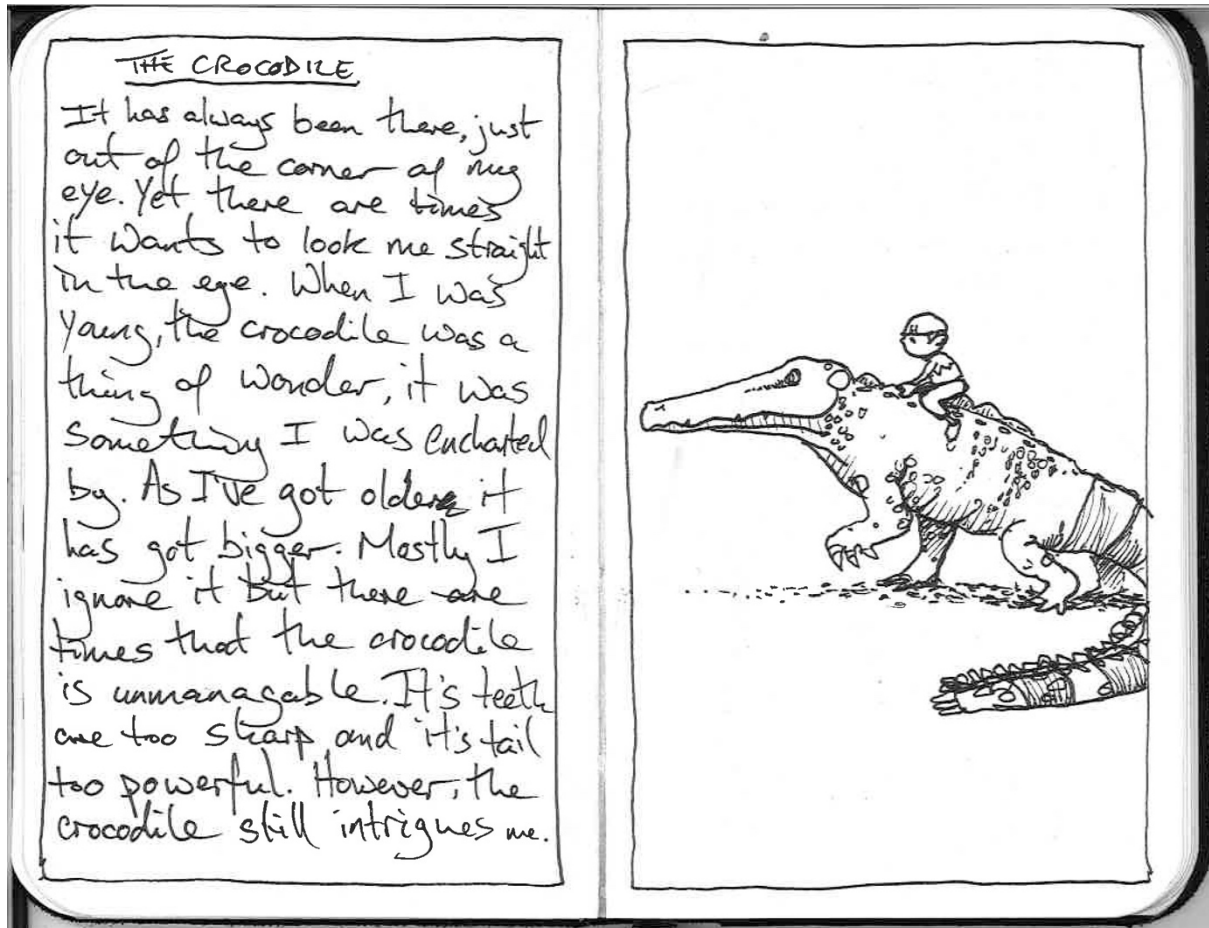


Fig. 8 Sketchbook 2024-2025

While producing the illustrations that accompany this research, I am having to consider the role and significance of the crocodile. The initial concept of using the crocodile as a character or metaphor to explore and move my narrative forward, arose from a conversation about the connection to words and what they made you feel. At the time I was already considering my past as a subject for creative exploration. The word crocodile popped into my head that switched on the memory of my painted crocodile. That memory and the very nature of the crocodile sat with me for a while. As an emotional and psychological metaphor, the crocodile is a powerful symbol. I had previously explored the use of the black dog for a series of illustrations for a picture book. This was to make sense of living with my own

experiences of depression as well as to create a book that would help younger readers to understand depression.



Fig. 9, *Living with Ned* 2017

To date this book remains unfinished but will be revisited. For now, the crocodile has replaced the black dog. Although not a metaphor for depression, the crocodile could be representative of all emotions. The creature lays just below the surface, dormant and passive in appearance. Log-like, it just floats. In a heartbeat it changes from something serene to a powerful carnivorous eating machine. Beautiful yet unpredictable. There is a symmetry here between the child's emotion and the crocodile's primaeval instincts.

I certainly had a fertile imagination as a child, creating fantasy worlds and scenarios with my toys (that same act of 'make believe' that I still employ today while working on illustrations), yet I never had an imaginary friend. I would hold conversations with my soft toys but never saw them more than that. There was no imaginary crocodile. On a practical level and for the purposes of creating the illustrations, the role of the crocodile is deliberately ambiguous. Is it imaginary or real? Can the few characters that feature throughout the narrative see the crocodile? Very much like the role of Hobbes in *Calvin and Hobbes* Watterson explains that 'When Hobbes is a stuffed toy in one panel and alive in the next, I'm juxtaposing the "grown-up" version of reality with Calvin's version and inviting the reader to decide which is truer' (Martell, 2009, p55). Although the crocodile remains very animated

and clearly not a stuffed toy, it does occasionally vary in size. The crocodile could even be a more personal and psychological manifestation of the child's ego. An example of this can be seen the picture book, *Not Now Bernard* by David McKee.

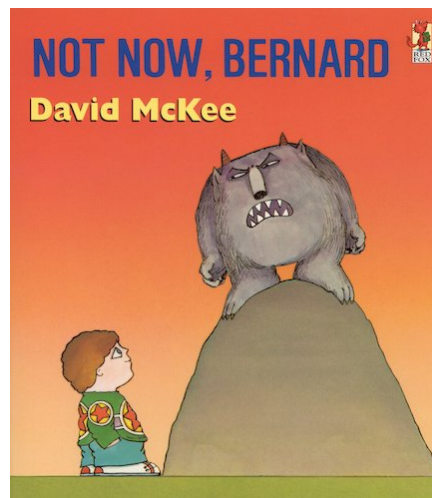


Fig.10 *Not Now Bernard* David McKee, 1980

This illustrated book focuses on Bernard, a child who is desperate for the attention of his parents. His preoccupied parents pay no heed to his requests, only to be told “Not now Bernard”. After warning his parents about a monster in the garden, and receiving the same reply, he is subsequently eaten. The monster then proceeds to try gain the attention of the parents only to be told ‘Not now Bernard’ and sent to bed.

He finally takes himself to bed, and when Bernard’s mother comes to switch off the light, he protests: ‘but I’m a monster’. The mother responds with the inevitable: ‘not now, Bernard’. It is at this point that it becomes clear: Bernard is the monster, and the monster is Bernard. (Simon. 2023, p532)

This is an experience that many of us have lived through as children, and as a parent, no doubt I am guilty of similar behaviour toward to my own children. One of my own illustrations created, celebrates that very experience (Fig.11). Trying to be helpful but perhaps just being in the way? Although supportive, my father never truly understood the purpose or importance of my creativity. As an engineer, he understood how an engine worked or how to fix a bike. Practical things that keep the world moving.



Fig. 11 *Crocodile-Father*

There is a strong possibility that the running theme in my drawings of machines and elaborate inventions, was a way to connect with my father. Even now, over forty-five years later, in working on this project, I have reached out to my dad for advice on how I would mechanise a crocodile. As helpful as he was, I still feel he is baffled by my reasons for wanting to build a crocodile.

The Machine

My objective throughout this journey has always been to make a machine, a kinetic automaton, a bizarre contraption. That early experience of visiting an art gallery has stayed with me for all these years. The memory of the actual object has diminished and only exists as a faded picture in my mind. What it looks like is almost insignificant now, yet the feeling of that encounter vividly remains. I remember that emotion and giddy excitement when I think about it, the six-year-old version of myself looking up and seeing the whirring wheels and wings (there were wings involved) but the mental picture is just beyond my reach. Having reached out to Swansea's Glynn Vivian Art Gallery, they were able to provide me with three suggestions of artists, who were exhibiting works during the early 1980s, that matched my very vague description. The artist that stood out as the most likely candidate was David Kemp.

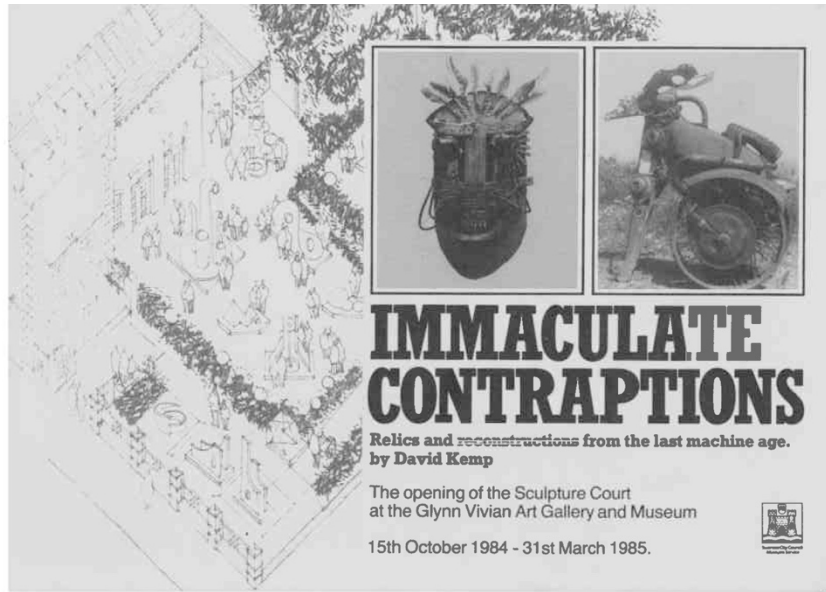


Fig. 12 *Immaculate Contraptions*- David Kemp exhibition 1984

Thus began a search to find a something amongst his portfolio that resembled the vague image I had in my head. It is evident in exploring his work that what he does is something that has subliminally inspired me. His heath Robinson-Esque sculptures have echoes in the work I have been creating for many years, from my childhood through to adulthood. I have not, to date, been able to find any image of his work that triggers that strong memory though. However, as I looked deeper into Kemp's back catalogue of sculptural work, it was evident that I had been inspired by his work many times during my creative journey. Before making the connection between his practice and my distant memories of encounters with art, I had inadvertently explored a piece of his work during a previous research project.

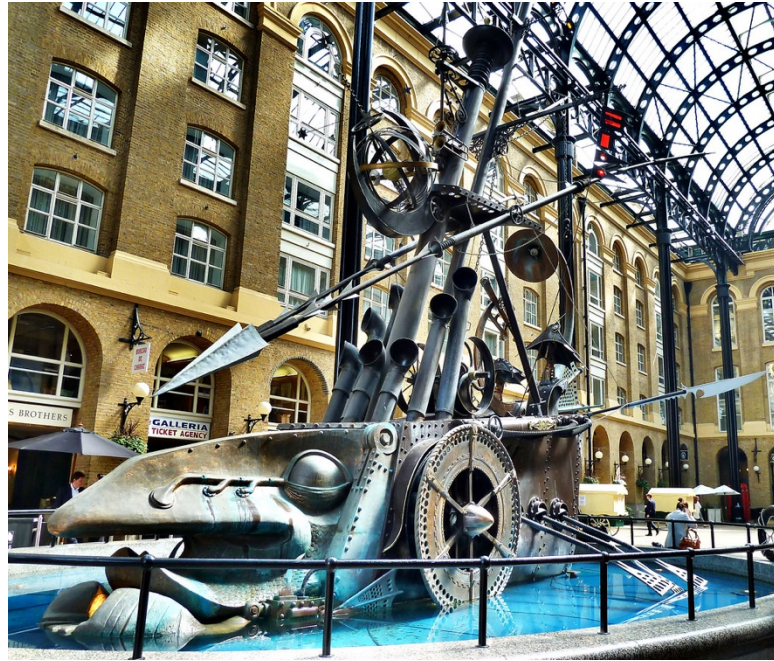


Fig. 13 *The Navigators* David Kemp

The Navigators (Fig.13) is a kinetic water fountain situated on the Southbank in London. My first encounter, not too long ago, was one of awe. I was unaware that this was created by the same artist that ignited my imagination so many years ago.

The early concepts of what would become *The Crocodile in the Pram*, were varied. I wanted something that could be interactive and engaged with. Ideas ranged from a small theatre stage set (Fig.3), where a hand crank would operate various elements, to the construction of a giant head which the viewer would enter and observe various mechanical oddities. As the research developed, I had moved on to the crocodile and the potential narrative which that could offer. Initially the focus was to create a life size crocodile that would sit upon a box or cabinet. This would house the required mechanism to create the crocodile's movement.

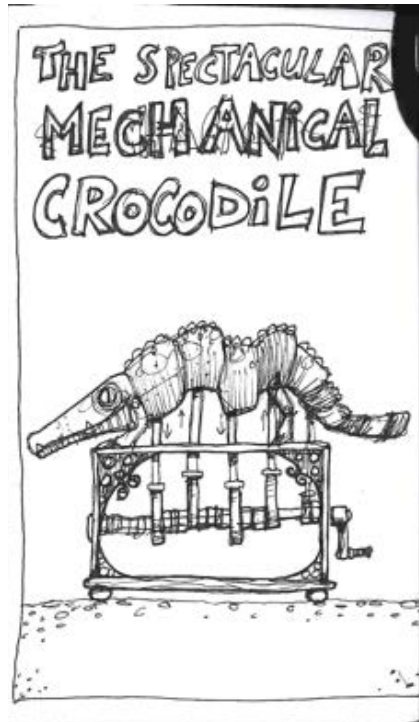


Fig.14 Sketchbook 2024-2025

Due to various factors, one of those being the practicalities of movement and how the sculpture would be transported, a throw away comment of “I had better put wheels on it” led me down the route of placing the crocodile in a pram.



Fig.14 Sketchbook 2024-2025

This idea changed the narrative of this piece of work. The question of the role of the crocodile changes. The narrative is no longer when did the crocodile appear? Metaphorically it has always been there, since the child was in a pram. The pram

also connected to childhood play and how we would repurpose things. As a child of the 80s, the hunt for pram wheels was always a necessity for go-cart building. A hunt that I had to revisit in the constructing of this current piece. From a practical point, suddenly the sculpture becomes mobile. The act of pushing the pram around becomes performative. This was an area I was previously exploring, illustration as performance.



Fig. 16 *Lobster Costume* (Explorative Praxis 2024)

Having previously made a costume from a series of illustrations (Fig.16), I felt it very fitting that this last element would echo that. It was also that exploration that directed the building material of the crocodile. Cardboard boxes. Apart from the sustainability angle (all boxes used were discarded packaging), there is something wonderfully textural about it. The cardboard was ideal to create a scale-like texture for the crocodile. There was a quality to the rawness of the beige/brown card that led me to the decision to not paint the crocodile. Subsequently the pram, which started life as a regular pram, was to emulate the crocodile. With the carriage removed, I was able to recreate it out of cardboard.



Fig. 17 *Crocodile-Pram*

A finishing touch of an added roller-skate to the tail was not a random decision. It acts as another connection to my childhood and play. A specifically sourced roller-skate was required, another evocative, Proustian object. Overwhelmingly warm memories are sparked when encountering some meaningful object from one's past (Berry. 2020 p55).

Chapter 2:

The Endless Picture Book

To call up the past in the form of an image, we must be able to withdraw ourselves from the action of the moment, we must have the power to value the useless, we must have the will to dream (Ricoeur, 2004 p66).



Fig. 18 *Crocodile-Boxes*

The act of making a cardboard crocodile has given me power to value the useless (Ricoeur, 2004 p66). What could be more useless than the discarded packaging that is ready for the bin? The childhood act of play is revisited through cutting and sticking. A child will often discard the expensive electronic gift and proceed to play with the box it came in. The cardboard box becomes a spaceship or a knight's armour or even a crocodile (Fig.18). The value of play, in a child's development is crucial on multiple levels. Ludistics, or play theory, investigates the necessity and importance of play in human development and communication (Sipe. 2008, p.75). It is through ludistics that we gain a greater understanding about how games and recreational activities (including creative activities) have an impact on us individually and society. And playing always involves time and the creative mixing up of past, present, and future (Cooper.p693). Memories triggered by a conversation or

a fleeting observation, I have been compelled to capture as illustrations as well as rambling notes. These illustrations that have been produced alongside the *Crocodile-Pram* (Fig.17) are almost a biproduct of the research and development process; a means of arriving at the finished automaton. The process of building and forming the cardboard into its reptilian form has acted as a conduit to my past and memories that have been out of reach. This creative endeavour of cutting and sticking has forced me to withdraw from the action of the moment (Ricoeur). Over the months the volume of illustrations has grown, with potential of becoming a picture book. A wordless picture book with no obvious running narrative. Each random image acts as its own narrative. It acts as a visual autobiography, a story of a moment in time. Does a picture book needs a beginning, a middle and an end?

It is essential to know where one is proceeding and to firmly establish, for example, how the mystery is going to be solved at its conclusion and, as the narrative unfolds, how seemingly impracticable barriers will be overcome through out. (Male. p.180)

The picture book has the ability to depart from linear narrative, and particularly explanation (Tan p.30). At this stage there is no conclusion to my pictorial narrative. A series of (at the time of writing) eighteen illustrations of memories capture random moments of the life of a child. There is a playfulness in the apparent randomness of these illustrations. It is, after all, a celebration of childhood. Due to their intermedial nature, picture books have a strong potential to be playful (Sipe. 2008 P55). Think of how a child recounts their recollections of a day's events. Everything is included no matter how insignificant a detail may seem. A series of illustrations with no apparent beginning or end. Very much like how we remember our childhoods. Can the moment when childhood ends be truly recalled? How can the concluding moments of one's childhood be captured in an image or illustration? Maybe they should not.

The Acquiring and collecting of 'Things'

Objects help us make our minds, reaching out to us to form active partnerships.
(Turtle. p.308)

Throughout the exploration and research into the area of memory and childhood, it has given me the excuse fill my shelves with the toys from my past. I

have been actively looking and acquiring certain toys that I once had or toys that I desired as a child but was never allowed.



Fig. 19 *Crocodile-Toys*

Toys are a natural focus for nostalgic inspiration: they are so ubiquitous throughout childhood that the act of putting them away for good is synonymous with growing up, giving them a symbolic weight that might well be unmatched. (Berry. 2020 p.100)

Is this putting away of toys the moment of the end of childhood? Is this the reason that I am collecting these objects and exploring and illustrating the memories of my past? This is something more than just the desire to return to childhood where things may have been simpler. The return to one's childhood is obviously folly, yet we can learn something about who we are and what we are simply by understanding what it is we want to return to (Berry. 2020 p.111). Psychologists, such as Winnicott for example, have identified that play is crucial to the development of a child into adulthood and toys might even represent some crucial aspect of our personality, stand-ins for formative experience or essential aspect of who we are (Berry. 2020, p100).

'It is in playing and only in playing that the individual child or adult is able to be creative and to use the whole personality, and it is only in being creative that the individual discovers the self.'

(Winnicott.1971,p.73)

I have previously discussed seeking paternal approval from my father. What of my mother? The creative 'spark' can certainly be attributed to the maternal connection. The catalyst for this project was that gallery visit in the early 1980s. An unexpected visit that my mother instigated for reasons that will remain out of reach to me. My mother was the person who encouraged my creativity, whether actively playing games with me or knitting toys for me to play with (Fig.20).



Fig. 20 *Crocodile-Mother*

Playing takes place initially in a potential space between the infant and the mother. It is an action in the transitional space between the purely internal and the actual. The transitional object is the first plaything, and the spirit of play is authorized by maternal provision. (Bolas. p.99)

I have previously talked about the first time I painted something that I was proud of; the crocodile. My 'education' in how to draw started a lot earlier than that. Through prodding around my memory, I am reminded of the Christmas when my mother taught me how to draw a tree. Having two older brothers there where many games I was not included in so spent many a time amusing myself or pestering my parents (Fig.22).



Fig. 21 Crocodile-Brothers

On one such occasion, during a family gathering, my mother picked me up and sat me on her lap. With a piece of paper spread out in front of us, step by step she made shapes, a curve here and a line there. Magically, a tree was conjured (Fig.22). I repeated this process, and I too drew a tree. This was not a childish lollipop tree; this had a curved trunk and branches and leaves. I have continued to draw trees. I have produced a countless forest of trees over my lifetime, the go-to doodle when in conversation on the phone or just passing the time.

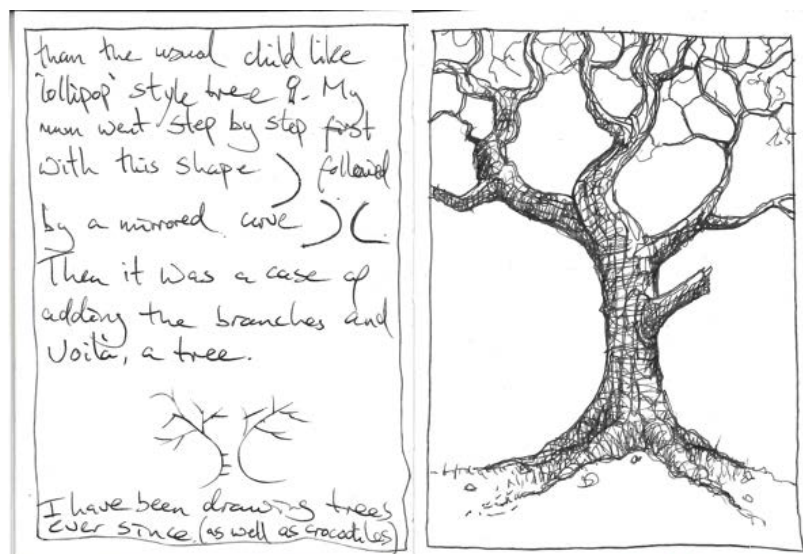


Fig. 22 Sketchbook 2024-2025

Conclusion

What is next? I have been aware of a shift in my work throughout this course. I have gained a better understanding of what kind of illustrator I can be. This shift has been achieved through the continuing and habitual need to draw which in turn, if not changed my style, has certainly improved and strengthened it.

Once developed, art habits are deep-seated, reliable, helpful, and convenient. Moreover, habits are stylistically important. In a sense, habits *are* style.

(Bayles, 1993. P103)

There are areas that I wish to explore further. The idea of illustration as performance is certainly rich with possibilities. Through exploring the materials that have been used, I have started creating further automatons and puppets. This is by no means a complete change in direction of my practice. The need to paint and draw on a piece of paper is still as magical to me as when I was six years old. With the illustrations produced throughout this course, I will be approaching agents as well as publishers to see if there is any interest to a wider audience. At the time of writing, one of these illustrations (fig 5. *Crocodile-The Painting*) has been shortlisted for the Batsford Prize 2025.

The body of work from the research, development and exploration through to the building of the crocodile (as well as the illustrating of a potential picture book) has been nothing more than 'playing'. This is not to under value play's importance. Far from it. Object play-for adults as well as children-engages the heart as well as the mind; it is a source of inner vitality. (Turtle. P.309). The whole process has been my way of celebrating play and its significance in understanding oneself. During the construction of the crocodile and the drawing of the illustrations, I have found a space to play and grow as a creative. It has been a way of reconnecting with my 6-year-old self and finding joy in the simple act of making (and playing).

The End

When I was One, I had just begun.

When I was Two, I was nearly new.

When I was Three, I was hardly Me.

When I was Four, I was not much more.

When I was Five, I was just alive.
But now I am Six, I'm as clever as clever.
So I think I'll be six now for ever and ever.
A.A.Milne 1927

List of Images

- | | |
|---------|---|
| Fig. 1 | <i>Billy Goat</i> 1998 |
| Fig. 2 | <i>Living with Ned</i> 2017 |
| Fig. 3 | <i>Sketchbook</i> 2024-2025 |
| Fig. 4 | <i>Crocodile- The Gallery Visit</i> |
| Fig. 5 | <i>Crocodile-The Painting</i> |
| Fig. 6 | <i>Christopher-Robin</i> E.H.Shepard, 1925 |
| Fig. 7 | Calvin and Hobbes Bill Watterson, 1985 |
| Fig. 8 | <i>Sketchbook</i> 2024-2025 |
| Fig. 9 | <i>Living with Ned</i> 2017 |
| Fig. 10 | <i>Not Now Bernard</i> David McKee, 1980 |
| Fig. 11 | <i>Crocodile-Father</i> |
| Fig. 12 | <i>Immaculate Contraptions-</i> David Kemp exhibition |
| Fig. 13 | <i>The Navigators</i> David Kemp |
| Fig. 14 | <i>Sketchbook</i> 2024-2025 |
| Fig. 15 | <i>Sketchbook</i> 2024-2025 |
| Fig. 16 | <i>Lobster Costume (Explorative Praxis 2024)</i> |
| Fig. 17 | <i>Crocodile-Pram</i> |
| Fig. 18 | <i>Crocodile-Boxes</i> |
| Fig. 19 | <i>Crocodile-Toys</i> |
| Fig. 20 | <i>Crocodile-Mother</i> |

Fig. 21 *Crocodile-Brothers*

Fig. 22 *Sketchbook 2024-2025*

References

Abate, M.A. (2019) “A Gorgeous waste”: solitude in Calvin and Hobbes’, *Journal of graphic novels & comics*,

Abate, M.A. (2019) “A Gorgeous waste”: solitude in Calvin and Hobbes’, *Journal of graphic novels & comics*

Abate, M.A. (2019) “A Gorgeous waste”: solitude in Calvin and Hobbes’, *Journal of graphic novels & comics*

Abate, M.A. (2019) “A Gorgeous waste”: solitude in Calvin and Hobbes’, *Journal of graphic novels & comics*,

Bayles, D., & Orland, T. (2023). *Art & fear: observations on the perils (and rewards) of artmaking*. Souvenir Press.

Berry, D. (2020). *On Nostalgia*. Toronto: Coach House Books.

Berry, D. (2020). *On Nostalgia*. Toronto: Coach House Books.

Berry, D. (2020). *On Nostalgia*. Toronto: Coach House Books.

Berry, D. (2020). *On Nostalgia*. Toronto: Coach House Books.

Berry, D. (2020). *On Nostalgia*. Toronto: Coach House Books.

Berry, D. (2020). *On Nostalgia*. Toronto: Coach House Books.

Bollas, C. (2023) *Essential Aloneness: Rome Lectures on DW Winnicott*. 1st edn. New York: Oxford University Press.

CECH, J. (2014) ‘Maurice Sendak and “Where the Wild Things Are”: A Legacy of Transformation’, *PMLA : Publications of the Modern Language Association of America*, 129(1),

Cooper, S.H. (2024) ‘Playing in Time: A Discussion of Smadar Steinbock’s “A Look at Chapter Four of Winnicott’s *Playing and Reality* Through the Prism of its Modalities of Temporality”’, *Psychoanalytic dialogues*, 34

Coplan, R.J. and Bowker, J.C. (2021) ‘Looking Beyond Social Motivations: Considering Novel Perspectives on Social Withdrawal in Childhood and Adolescence’, *Merrill-Palmer Quarterly*, 67

Male, A. (2007) *Illustration : a theoretical and contextual perspective*. Lausanne ; AVA Academia.

Martell, N. (2009). *Looking for Calvin and Hobbes: The Unconventional story of Bill Watterson and his Revolutionary Comic Strip*. New York: Bloomsbury.

McCullen, S (2022) *Picturebook Makers*. Estonia: dPICTUS

Milne, A.A (1928) *The House at Pooh Corner*. Methuen Children's Books Ltd.

Ricoeur, P. (2004) *Memory, history, forgetting*. Pbk. ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Sendak, Maurice. "Caldecott Medal Acceptance." *Caldecott & Co.: Notes on Books and Pictures*. New York: di Capua-Farrar, 1988.

Simon, F.A.J. (2023) 'Not Now, Bernard: a Freudian fable – Psychiatry in literature', *British journal of psychiatry*, 223(5),

Sipe, L.R. and Pantaleo, S.J. (2008) *Postmodern picturebooks : play, parody, and self-referentiality*. New York: Routledge.

Turkle, S. (2007) *Evocative objects : things we think with*. 1st ed. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Turkle, S. (2007) *Evocative objects : things we think with*. 1st ed. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Wallace, B. (1996) 'A storybook childhood', *Maclean's*, 109(19)

Wallace, B. (1996) 'A storybook childhood', *Maclean's*, 109(19)

Winnicott, D.W. (1971) *Playing and reality*. London: Routledge.

Bibliography

Abate, M.A. (2019) "A Gorgeous waste": solitude in Calvin and Hobbes', *Journal of graphic novels & comics*, 10(5–6), pp. 488–504. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1080/21504857.2018.1523204>.

Bayles, D., & Orland, T. (2023). *Art & fear: observations on the perils (and rewards) of artmaking*. Souvenir Press.

Berry, D. (2020). *On Nostalgia*. Toronto: Coach House Books

Bollas, C. (2023) *Essential Aloneness: Rome Lectures on DW Winnicott*. 1st edn. New York: Oxford University Press. Available at:
<https://doi.org/10.1093/oso/9780197683880.001.0001>.

CECH, J. (2014) 'Maurice Sendak and "Where the Wild Things Are": A Legacy of Transformation', *PMLA : Publications of the Modern Language Association of America*, 129(1), pp. 104–106. Available at:
<https://doi.org/10.1632/S0030812900168117>.

Cooper, S.H. (2024) 'Playing in Time: A Discussion of Smadar Steinbock's "A Look at Chapter Four of Winnicott's Playing and Reality Through the Prism of its Modalities of Temporality"', *Psychoanalytic dialogues*, 34(5), pp. 689–697. Available at:
<https://doi.org/10.1080/10481885.2024.2394393>.

Coplan, R.J. and Bowker, J.C. (2021) 'Looking Beyond Social Motivations: Considering Novel Perspectives on Social Withdrawal in Childhood and Adolescence', *Merrill-Palmer Quarterly*, 67(4), pp. 390–415. Available at:
<https://doi.org/10.1353/mpq.2021.0020>.

Doonan, J. *Looking at Pictures in Picture Books* (Gloucester: The Thimble Press, 1993)

Farr, I. (2012) *Memory; Whitechapel: Documents of Contemporary art*. London, MIT Press.

Gannon, R. & Fauchon, M. (2021). *Illustration Research Methods*. Bloomsbury Publishing.

Jung, C.G. (Carl G. and Jaffe, A. (1983) *Memories, dreams, reflections*. London: Fontana Paperbacks.

Layard, J. (John) and Bosch, A.S. (2009) *The snake, the dragon and the tree : an analytical case history*. Canada.

Lewis, M. (ed.) (2022) Beyond art fundamentals : a guide to emotion, mood, and storytelling for artists. Worcester, United Kingdom: 3dtotal Publishing.

Male, A. (2007) Illustration : a theoretical and contextual perspective. Lausanne ; AVA Academia.

Male, A. (2019) The power and influence of illustration : achieving impact and lasting significance through visual communication. London ; Bloomsbury Visual Arts.

Martell, N. (2009). Looking for Calvin and Hobbes: The Unconventional story of Bill Watterson and his Revolutionary Comic Strip. New York: Bloomsbury.

McCullen, S (2022) Picturebook Makers. Estonia: dPICTUS

Milne, A.A (1928) The House at Pooh Corner. Methuen Children's Books Ltd.

Muncey, T. (2010) Creating autoethnographies. London: SAGE.

Nikolajeva, & Scott, C. (2006). How picturebooks work. London: Routledge.

Ricoeur, P. (2004) Memory, history, forgetting. Pbk. ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Sendak, Maurice. "Caldecott Medal Acceptance." Caldecott & Co.: Notes on Books and Pictures. New York: di Capua-Farrar, 1988.

Shedlock, M.L. and Steinmetz, E. (1979) The art of the story-teller. 3rd ed. / foreword by Anne Carroll Moore / revised with a new bibliography by Eulalie Steinmetz. New York: Dover Publications etc.

Simon, F.A.J. (2023) 'Not Now, Bernard: a Freudian fable – Psychiatry in literature', *British journal of psychiatry*, 223(5), pp. 532–532. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1192/bjp.2023.103>.

Sipe, L.R. and Pantaleo, S.J. (2008) *Postmodern picturebooks : play, parody, and self-referentiality*. New York: Routledge.

Turkle, S. (2007) *Evocative objects : things we think with*. 1st ed. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Wallace, B. (1996) 'A storybook childhood', *Maclean's*, 109(19), p. 62. Available at: <https://research-ebsco-com.ezproxy.uwtsd.ac.uk/linkprocessor/plink?id=04bb5254-ba6f-3f07-ae4a-46ecb0160995> (Accessed: 16 April 2025).

Winnicott, D.W. (1971) *Playing and reality*. London: Routledge.

