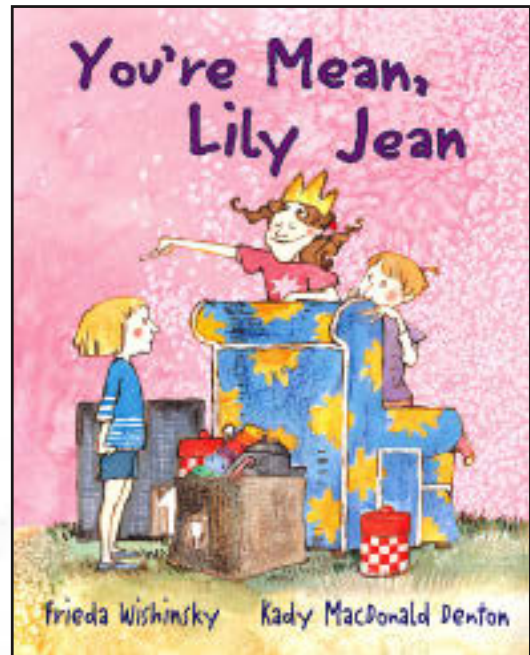


Book Fair Illustrator Spotlight On...



Kady MacDonald Denton



Q What inspires you to draw?

A It doesn't take much. I draw most days just because I enjoy it. I don't worry about a drawing being "good." I just like to see if I can catch the way someone is standing or the expression on someone's face. I draw the people I see at meetings or on a bus. I take a sketch pad with me on walks. Sometimes I just make things up. I really enjoy drawing the characters in a story.

Q What advice do you have for young illustrators?

A I suggest they pick a story they enjoy and make up their own illustrations, just for fun and for practise. It can be useful to take some drawing and painting classes. Most artists find their way eventually but a good instructor can shorten the journey. You can learn a lot by just playing about on a page. If it's not what you want, toss it away. It also helps if you learn to look carefully at things around you: how light makes shadows, how animals change their bodies into different shapes, how a tree grows, things like that.

Q What was your favourite book when you were growing up?

A One book that I loved when I was young, and that I still enjoy many years later, is H.A. Rey's book on stargazing. I think it is called *The Stars: A New Way to See Them*. I liked the illustrations; I still do. I take the book with me when I am out looking at the night sky.

Q What do you like to do when you're not drawing?

A I like gardening and puttering around outside on projects. I love to read. A long walk is nice and so is a swim. I like going out to a movie.

Q What has been the biggest achievement of your career so far?

A Something I greatly enjoyed was going to Rome for a special exhibit of Canadian picture books. Two Canadian illustrators and two authors were chosen to attend the 1992 exhibit which was called *Books from Afar*.

Q You illustrate your books using a mixture of watercolours, gouache and acrylic inks. Is there any other art style that interests you?

A I do most often use watercolours and gouache in my illustration work. I mail my original work to the publisher so the materials need to be strong. However often a story is best served another way, so I have also used pen/ink, collage, chalk/charcoal. I have tried most materials at one time or another but not oil paints (not for illustration work), simply because of the time oil takes to dry.