



Suzi Bricelj (*1971)

Everything perfectly clear

When you're reading something together with your children the best case is when before saying the first sentence you look at the picture and you immediately understand what type of story it's going to be. There's no need to know what it is going to be about. You just need to feel whether you'll laugh at it or be impressed (perhaps to tears) or whether you'll fear so much that you'll have to cuddle. Therefore this – the input – is made by an illustration.

Suzi Bricelj knows how to do this: she understands that children perceive stories more sensitive than the adults. She knows that children can see (as already once wrote Behzad Gharibpour) „accurately and far“. They need to understand them and find some meaning in them as well.

Therefore she paints simply (often in a descriptive way with strong borders and bright colors), as if she waited for the first sight of the small readers when they open a book and as if she wanted to provide them with the confidence that what they see can be found in words as well. But she's not superficially simple. The technique she uses to simplify the story is intentional and reaches the essence of the figure and

even the edge of the naive painting. Therefore her paintings balance and vibrate between two states – the state when they're just artistic creations and the state when they become (just) descriptive print of a book which should make the book more beautiful. She sometimes gets closer to this edge, she also chats with it but never exceeds it.

This tension is a place where Suzi Bricelj keeps a power of her pictures. It's the way she uses colors and shapes, how she catches the line and how she fills the areas. She does no more with her brush than a narrator does with his voice: she walks through the lines. In a situation when adults change voices (they speak with a high, squeaky voice and then use the deep, humming one) in order to keep children's attention and not allow them to disperse, she uses a picture which details will force children to pay attention.

Every detail is worth of an examination with magnifying glass: acrylic technique which she often uses looks simply only with first look. It forces you to think how to fill the blank area so that the picture would not be difficult and so that there arises a space for reader's own imagination. She uses this unique technique in order not to drag the reader down to the passivity by fullness.

She brings joy into the illustrations by colors. She lets the color do the job in the highest and clear tones without damping. Everything's just perfectly clear in her stories.

SUZI BRICELJ (1971) she studied in Slovenia during the years 1998 – 2002 (at the Academy of Fine Arts and Design in Ljubljana), in France (École nationale supérieure des Arts Décoratifs à École supérieure des Arts graphiques in Paris) and also in Slovakia (at the Academy of Fine Arts in

Bratislava, in the Lubomir Longauer's studio). She exhibited her work in numerous solo and group exhibitions at home and abroad as well, for instance in: Austria, Italy, Australia, France, USA or Croatia. She currently works also as a university teacher. She has illustrated more than 50 books and textbooks, for example *Kako raste laž* by Helena Kraljič (2013) and *Krokodil* by Tona Pavček (2012), fairy tales book *Kokokoška Emilija* (2009) by Svetlana Makarovič but also *Novely* by Drago Jančar (2009), *Grécke mýty* (2008) by Eduard Petiška or fairy tales for little children *Malá nočná torta* by Toon Tellegen. She closely cooperates with *Cicban* magazine and she won a number of Slovenian and foreign awards, for instance *White Ravens* (2008, 2011) or *Levstik* award (2005).