



# Windows into Illustration Frann Preston-Gannon

Article Author:

[Frann Preston-Gannon](#) [1]

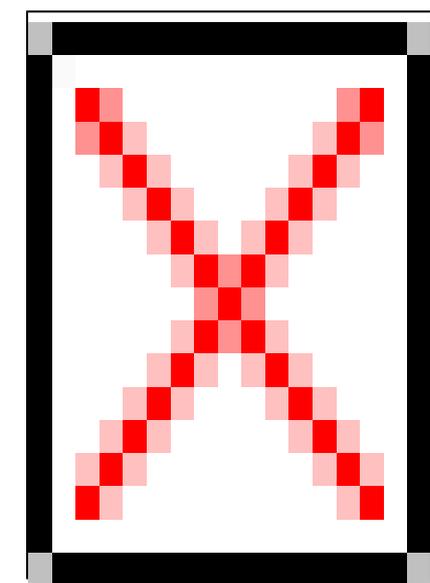
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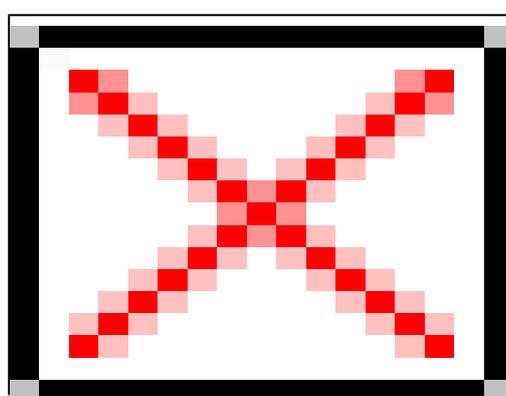
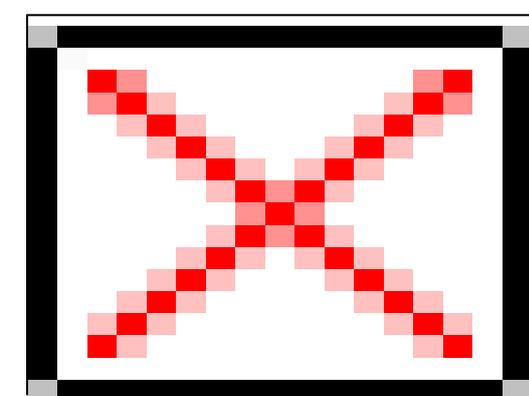
Windows into Illustration

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## Windows into Illustration: Frann Preston-Gannon

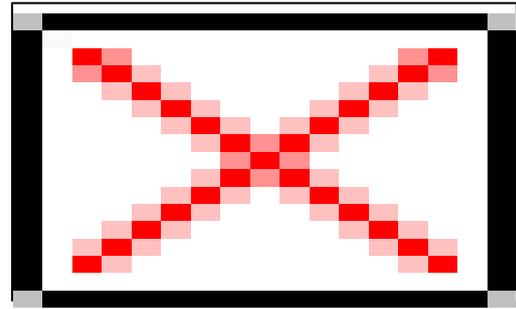


Frann Preston-Gannon is an award-winning author/illustrator whose books have been published around the world. They include **The Journey Home**, **In The Swamp By The Light Of The Moon** and **I Am The Seed That Grew The Tree**, which won Waterstone's Children's Gift Book of the Year 2018. Frann was the UK's first recipient of a **Sendak Fellowship** in 2011 that saw her living with the master of illustration, Maurice Sendak, for a month at his residence in Connecticut. Here she describes her illustration approach and technique.



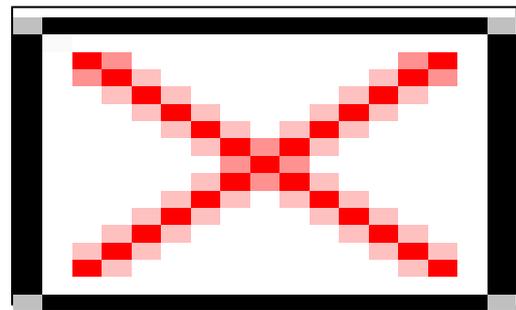
Like most illustrators my books start their life as tiny pencil thumbs to aid in mapping out how the story arc will work. These are then transformed into more detailed pencil roughs, which go back and forth between the publisher and myself until we are confident enough to begin colour images. This is when I start to build my illustrations through a process of collaging hand-made textures on Photoshop. I make these textures in general with a mix of paint, inks, pencils and pastels. I also draw a lot of separate elements by hand before combining everything on Photoshop with a Wacom pen

and screen. People often seem surprised that I make my images digitally but I enjoy how playful and experimental the process can be - editing, deleting, moving and reducing elements as I go along and I still feel I can retain a lot of the hand drawn quality.

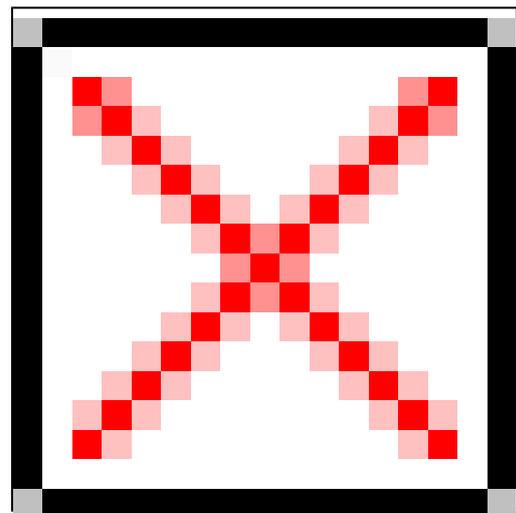


When starting **The Bad Day** I knew I wanted this book to be packed with humour and so getting the characters right was key. I think through big eyes and expressive face young children can really connect with the drama and mild peril that the animals experience. Someone described the book as 'Laurel and Hardy meets **Brambly Hedge**' and I think that means I succeeded!

I have a (nearly) 4 year old so she is the perfect guinea pig to test out the effectiveness of my picture books. Of all the spreads it is the sneeze page that attracts her most. She squeals with delight at the slobbery mouse and flecks of saliva and together we perform the over the top sneeze as loud as possible. I live for these sort of interactive moments when I read books to her, so I am so glad this had the desired effect with her.



As with any book, there was a lot of back and forth with my wonderful editor, Katie Haworth, and I particularly enjoyed combing through all of her thoughtful and sensible suggestions such as the one below regarding a fly.



It took a while to get the cyclical feel of this book right. But there was something very satisfying about deciding to end the book with the final small moment of the squirrel, through the help of his friends, finally getting his paws on the juicy nut.

I can only hope that children have as much reading this book as I did making it!

**The Bad Day** is published by Templar, 978-1787415652, £12.99 hbk and 978-1787416604 £6.99 pbk.

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