

Valérieane Leblond



Where did you grow up?

Angers, in the west of France.

Where did you go to school?

Angers, Rennes and Nantes.

What was the best / worst thing about your school?

I loved school – doing art, writing stories, and learning geometry.

What did you want to be when you grew up?

An author.

What was your favourite book when you were a child?

The Ox-cart Man by Donald Hall and Barbara Cooney – a story about a farming family in USA.

What are your hobbies?

I like drawing, reading, and cooking.

What makes you happy?

Seeing my children happy.

What makes you angry?

Bullying.

When did you consider being an illustrator?

I've always been drawing, but I started thinking about it seriously in secondary school.

From where do you get your ideas?

Everywhere; stories that I've heard, books that I've read, Mediaeval and modern illustrations.

Are there any themes which particularly appeal to you?

I like drawing nature, hearing stories from the past, and seeing magic in my everyday life.

What advice can you give to budding illustrators?

Get started, and think of every illustration as practice for your next one.

What's the best / worst part about being an illustrator?

Best: seeing my illustrations in books and imagining people across the world enjoying them.
Worst: noticing that I've forgotten something after a book has gone to print!

Quick fire questions:

Favourite childhood book?

The Ox-cart Man by Donald Hall and Barbara Cooney.

Favourite character from a children's book?

Max in *Lle Mae'r Pethau Gwyllt yn Byw / Where the Wild Things Are* by Maurice Sendak.

Favourite place?

The steps outside my grandmother's home on a sunny day.

Favourite food?

Millefeuille (like a custard slice, but much nicer!).

Favourite film or show?

Wall-E.

Favourite word?

Nuage (the French word for 'cloud').

Superpower of choice?

The ability to teleport, so that I could go and visit friends and family in an instant.

Favourite social media network?

Instagram, because there are so many talented illustrators on it.

What makes you smile?

My children.

If not an illustrator, what would you be?

Ideal job?
Author.

Top tip for budding illustrators?

Don't ever stop reading children's books and enjoying the illustrations.