

**Gus Gordon Introduction, by Bernard Mithieux, CM1 teacher and coordinator for PEAC : Parcours éducatif artistique et culturel / *Artistic and cultural educational pathm* at LCS Primary school.**

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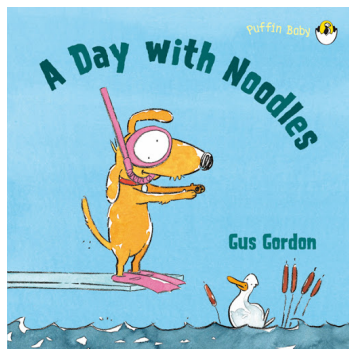


**G**us Gordon is an internationally acclaimed illustrator and author. He has illustrated and written over 80 books for children. His books which include *Wendy, Herman and Rosie* (a CBCA 'Honour book'), *Somewhere Else* and *The Last Peach*, have sold in over 20 countries worldwide and have received wide international recognition. He has been shortlisted for the German Youth Literature Award, the Sakura Medal in Japan, the Kirico book awards in Spain, the Les Incorruptibles prize in France, the Premio

Anderson Children's Book awards in Italy and has twice been nominated for the Astrid Lindgren Memorial Award, the world's largest award for children's and young adult literature. He lives with his wife and three kids in Sydney, Australia.

To know him better, let's have a talk with him, led by some of his books' titles.

- A day with Noodle : What would be « a (usual) day with Gus Gordon » ?



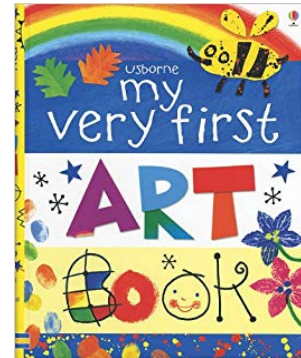
*Normally I begin the day by dropping our kids off at the school bus stop. Then I head out for an early run or swim in the ocean. Then I take a cup of coffee up to the studio. Sadly, I don't dive into anything creative at first as I always need to send a few emails. This is quite boring. Once these are done, I can then think about my day. Depending on where I am in the process of making a book, I am basically either writing or illustrating. On my writing days I am*

*working on a picture book manuscript; writing, editing, polishing and more polishing. It's a maddening, exhilarating, frightening and intensely satisfying process, all at once. On my illustrating days I could be doing any number of things depending on where my book stage is at; creating characters, sketching storyboards, gathering collage materials, designing a cover or painting my final artworks. I enjoy all the stages of creating a book, but I think I enjoy my illustration days a little more as don't have to focus as much which means I can have my music turned up nice and loud!*

➤ My very first Art book:

Do you have a specific memory of your first book ?

*The first book I ever illustrated was a book called The Trouble With Parents by Di Bates in 1996. Looking back, I'm still not sure why they allowed me to illustrate it. My work was quite undeveloped, but I guess they must have seen something they liked in it. I remember a point, halfway through illustrating the story, when I thought to myself: *This feels like what I should be doing. And that felt wonderfully liberating.**



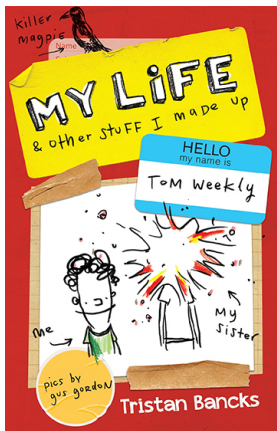
➤ Rules rule: For you, what would be the main « rules » to be a good writer/illustrator?

*It's mainly hard work and if you love what you do, you'll do that anyway. Having said that, here are a few things I've learned.*

- *Be yourself. Write for yourself. Don't write for the market/audience*
- *Read a lot/write a lot/draw a lot*
- *Surround yourself with creative, ambitious, positive people*
- *Plan your day, month, year (otherwise it won't happen)*
- *Teach yourself to approach problems from another angle*
- *If you love it, stick at it. Learn to be stubborn and your voice will reveal itself over time*

➤ Born to bake: Would you say « Born to be illustrator ? » Is it something you ever wanted to do as a child?

*For as long as I can remember I wanted to be an illustrator. Long before I knew that you had to get a job in this world, I drew and wanted to draw every day. I didn't know what type of illustrator, but I knew that a life of drawing would be a happy life.*



- My life and other stuff I made up : Your new book « Finding François » will be released this year... Could you tell us more about this « stuff » you made up ?

*Finding François is the story about a pig called Alice. Alice lives with her grandmother in Paris. Together they make a very good team. She loves her grandmother very much but often wishes she had a friend her own size to talk to. So, Alice comes up with a clever plan and when she finds François, she finds so much more.*

*This is a gentle, reassuring tale about a long-distance friendship that spans the length of the River Seine and the loss of a loved one. It captures the highs and lows of being little, and the tough parts of childhood. It revels in life's fantastic possibilities and celebrates the affirming power of friendship.*

#### Bibliography:

- **Rules Rule** by Bernadette Kelly (Longman/Black Dog Books, 2003)
- **Born To Bake** by Phillip Gwynne (Penguin, 2005)
- **My Very First Art Book** by Rosie Dickins & Sarah Courtauld (Usborne UK, 2010)
- **A Day With Noodles** by Gus Gordon (Penguin, 2008)
- **My Life & Other Stuff I Made Up** by Tristan Bancks (Random House, 2011)

**Gus Gordon will be present at LCS for 3 weeks and will work with all the Primary school classes. We will organise a presentation of the students work to parents later in the school year.**