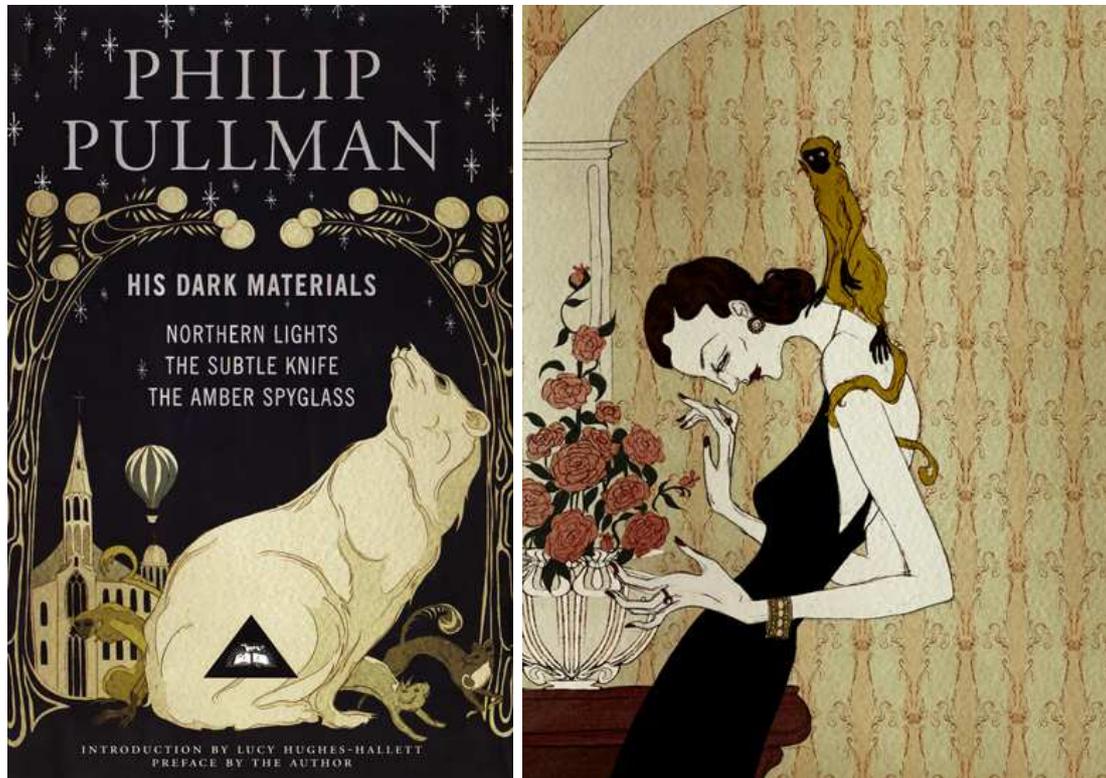


CITTAGAZZE.COM interviews KATE BAYLAY, illustrator
January 2012



The new cover for *His Dark Materials*, and [Marisa Coulter and her daemon](#), by [Kate Baylay](#).

Kate Baylay is 22. She obtained an illustration degree this July at the University of the West of England, in Bristol. She recently created the cover for the new UK and US edition of Philip Pullman's *His Dark Materials*, as a first commissioned work. She kindly accepted to answer our questions, sent by e-mail.

ABOUT DRAWING

How long have you been drawing? When did you decide to become a professional illustrator?

K. Baylay: I have always enjoyed drawing very much. While I was taking art at sixth form I decided to study illustration at University and ever since then I knew I wanted to be an illustrator.

What is the difference between drawing for pleasure and for professional purposes?

K. Baylay: The main difference is that when I am drawing for professional purposes I have to find inspiration from subjects chosen by other people. When I draw for pleasure I choose my favourite books and stories. I was very lucky with the *His Dark Materials* cover because I found the books so interesting and inspiring, it was a very enjoyable project.

Are you drawing for illustration only or do you work on other fields as well?

K. Baylay: Illustration interests me the most and it is the area of art I m best at so I mainly draw for illustration.

How do you work? What are your tools (computer, pencils...) and how long does it usually take to complete a drawing?

K. Baylay: I do the line drawing by hand and then scan it in with different painted textures and complete it on photoshop. Depending on the piece of work it usually takes me a couple of days to finish it.

WORKING ON HIS DARK MATERIALS

How did you get involved on the *His Dark Materials* project?

K. Baylay: I showed samples of my work to Everyman and they told me that this project was coming up. Naturally I was very interested in pursuing the chance to do the cover illustration so I submitted some ideas.

Do you read a book differently when you have to illustrate it?

K. Baylay: I find that I always visualize books and stories when I'm reading them and often feel inspired to illustrate them even if that wasn't my purpose in reading it.

How did you create this cover? What were your choices to translate into images the content of the trilogy?

K. Baylay: I thought lorek Byrnison was such a central and arresting character I immediately felt inspired to make him the main focus of my illustration. I wanted to have the pivotal characters represented by their daemons because I found them such an interesting concept and the church was to represent the religious themes in the book.

Did the publisher made any comment on the work you submitted? Was there any modification required?

K. Baylay: There were a few changes I needed to make and I had to submit a few ideas before the final illustration was accepted.

For *His Dark Materials* and for Roald Dahl's *Completely Unexpected Tales*, you created a cover with animals rather than humans. Was it a deliberate choice?

K. Baylay: For the *His Dark Materials* cover I focussed on animals because they have such a large role in the books as the daemons all have animal forms. I found the idea that the form of each daemon reflected the personalities of their people very interesting.

What do you feel when seeing your own work on bookstore shelves?

K. Baylay: It's very exciting! Particularly as Philip Pullman is such a well known and respected author, I feel very proud to have my illustration on the cover of his book.

And now, what are your next projects?

K. Baylay: I am currently working on a new project and hope to get more commissions for book illustrations.

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Cittàgazze wants to thank very much Kate Baylay for her kind answers and wishes her all the best for her career.

You can find more about Kate Baylay's work and order art prints on her website:
<http://www.katebaylay.com>

About www.cittagazze.com:

For more than nine years now, *Cittàgazze* (www.cittagazze.com) aims at informing French audience on the author Philip Pullman.

The website covers all the author's projects, his published and forthcoming books including 'His Dark Materials' trilogy, their adaptations (movies, theatre, audio-books...) and associated topics. Keeping up with the latest news and press releases, *Cittàgazze* provides as well French translations of articles, investigations and multiple interviews. Various stage play adaptations were recently extensively covered, as well as movie developments of New Line's 'The Golden Compass', Dynamic Entertainment's 'The Butterfly Tattoo' or BBC's 'Sally Lockhart Mysteries'.

Cittàgazze is a community of over 1200 members. On forum boards, members can debate on books and news or discuss on cultural topics and personal life. Interactive activities such as weekly quiz or contests are provided. 'Real life' meetings regularly take place. Over 300 visitors a day read our website and we are now active on facebook and Twitter.

Managed by fans, *Cittàgazze* is the French reference database about Philip Pullman and his books. Our numerous contacts notably allowed us to visit 'The Golden Compass' movie set along international media such as BBC or MTV and attend its world premiere in London, or have a special advanced testing of the Sega videogame. *Cittàgazze* team also had many opportunities to interview Mr. Pullman himself plus people involved in the books or stage play and movie adaptations. We are also regularly contacted by teachers or cultural institutions looking for information.

www.cittagazze.com

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