

ANNA WALKER

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### **1. Where did the idea for Florette come from?**

I love travelling but when I travel, I sometimes feel a bit anxious in a new environment.

A few years ago, our family travelled to Paris. There was a moment in the city, where traffic was rushing by, horns and ambulances were blaring, when I saw a shop filled with plants on the other side of the road. I stopped and looked. It was a strange peaceful moment, as if nature was holding out her hand, reassuring me. This moment was the beginning of Florette.

I carry with me a visual diary always. In my visual diary I paint or sketch things I am curious about or interested in, that bring me joy, bring me sadness or amuse me. On the same trip to Paris we visited Versailles and on a wooden panelled wall were the silhouettes and names of all the dogs that belonged to Louis XIV's dogs. Among them was 'Florisette' which I thought was a beautiful name and I wrote in my visual diary. Florette came from a combination of 'Florist', 'Forest' and Louis XIV's dog!

### **2. What inspires you when you're creating your books?**

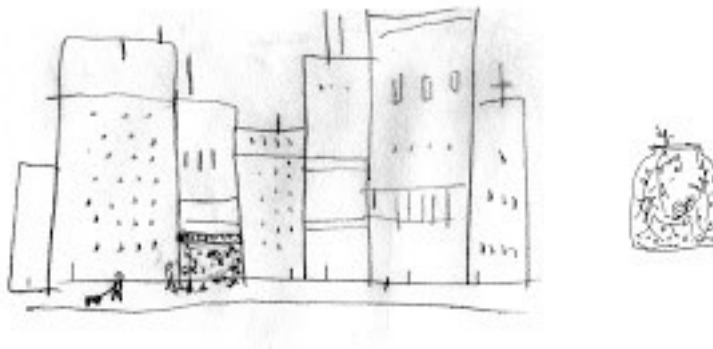
I am inspired by daily life. Small things like listening to my children telling me a funny caterpillar story, the way our cat lies on its back like an otter, watching the trees outside my studio window and daydreaming. I enjoy exploring quiet stories that have a strong feeling behind them.

### **3. What techniques/media did you use in Florette**

I used a mixture of watercolour, ink, pencil and collage. The paintings were made using traditional techniques and layered together in photoshop.

### **4. How long does it take you to make a book**

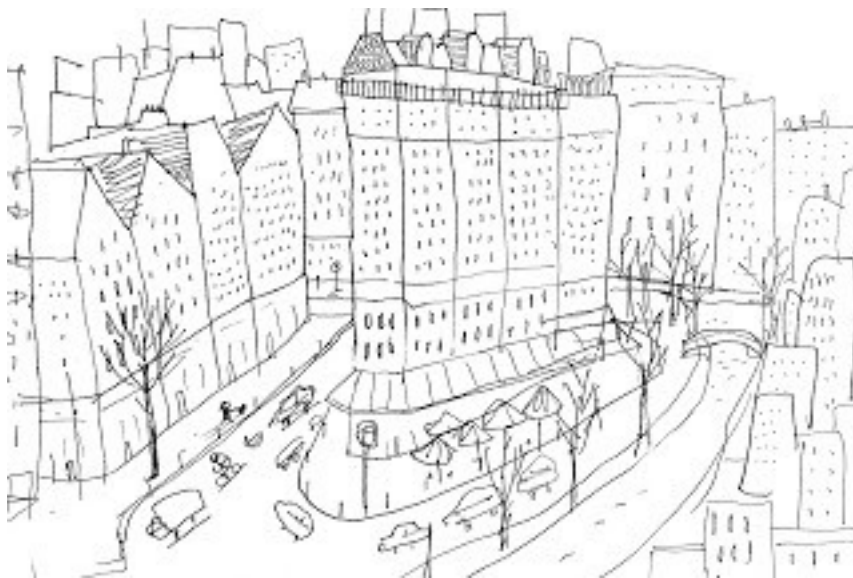
Creating a book takes me around 12 months. But from the very beginning of the idea to seeing the book in print takes more like three years.



This is the tiny thumbnail sketch of the idea of a forest in the grey city and the thought that you can bring a piece of the forest home.



I think about the ideas and images in storyboard. I almost see the story as a small film. It's important to me how we move through the different scenes.



The background becomes a character in the story too. I do a lot of research as to the colour palette, setting, and feel of the story.



This moment is one of my favourites in Florette.



An early cover sketch.