



Quentin Blake: In the Theatre of the Imagination: An Artist at Work

Ghislaine Kenyon

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Quentin Blake is one of the foremost illustrators of the twentieth century. Best known for his collaboration with Roald Dahl on books such as *The Giraffe and the Pelly and Me*, *The Twits*, and *Matilda*, he is cherished by young and old alike.

Still, his work has not attained "fine art" status. How does Blake's background in education inform his work? And what is the relationship between the work he makes and the life he leads? Distinguished curator Ghislaine Kenyon spent a great deal of time with Blake and in this biography, she provides profound insight into an extraordinary man and his remarkable body of work.

A shared enthusiasm for education brought Kenyon and Blake together. Kenyon staged a jointly curated exhibition, *Tell Me A Picture*, during Blake's tenure as Children's Laureate (1999–2001). She followed Blake during the years he continued to work "off the page," producing work for hospitals in Angers and Paris and staging major exhibitions around the world. Kenyon shows that Blake's life informs his illustrations and his artwork, in turn, informs his life--a life which is extremely private, mysterious, and full of complexities and ambiguities.

Kenyon has produced not merely a biography but a critical view of the artist's work. This book is a fitting tribute to Quentin Blake's journey and to his great artistic legacy.

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