



**School:** School of Creative Industries

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**Project Title:** Making books: character design and narrative in illustration

**UOA:** 32 - Art and Design: History, Practice and Theory

## 300-Word Statement

This collection comprises an article, a book chapter and an exhibition of miniature pop-up books. The research in the book chapter and article draws on a semiotic framework to examine narrative and character design in books from the perspective of an illustrator. Scale and three-dimensional aspects of book design are further explored by the creation of three miniature pop-up books for an exhibition.

The miniature pop-up books use a range of paper engineering and illustration techniques. Commissioned for a group exhibition, they were made during an artist's residency and exhibited in the bedroom of a vintage OKWA dolls' house in Amsterdam alongside work by artists Siobhan Tattan and Harald Den Breejen.

The Dollhouse Space tests the role of scale, value, materiality and virtual worth in the art world today and draws on the 17th century gentleman's cabinet of curiosities and the lady's equivalent of outfitting a dollhouse. Creating miniature work raises practical questions about scale and the process of making, but also poses questions around perceptions of culture: a dolls' house contains implicit connotations around childhood, gender, domesticity and social values.

Novelty books are a growing part of the children's books publishing category in the UK at the moment. Pop-up books explore the boundaries of the book form, offering different reading experiences through unfolding paper and the space within the book – a protruding three-dimensional element changes the dynamic around both the act of opening a page, when a new structure unfolds, but also the space between the open pages and the viewer, introducing a three-dimensional disruption to the reading experience, which from a making-perspective alters decisions that need to be made around character design, narrative and page design.