

Identity and Visual Culture in David Wiesner's *The Three Pigs* and *Art & Max*

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Abstract

Marita Sturken and Lisa Cartwright investigate visual culture 'as a set of processes or practices through which individuals and groups come to make sense of things, including their own identities within and even against or outside the group.'¹ David Wiesner's visual storytelling in *The Three Pigs* (2001) and *Art & Max* (2010) invites readers to participate in a twenty-first-century visual culture that is beginning to conceptualize identity as described by Peggy Phelan, 'a form of both resisting and claiming the other, declaring the boundary where the self diverges from and merges with the other.'² Such participation is integral to the attainment of a visually literate community. In both Wiesner's texts, the central characters -- the three pigs and Art -- become active agents in their own deconstruction of self and story to undergo a reconstruction and renewal from their experiences and the relationships they have formed. By first entering the blank white expanse behind the traditional story and conventional canvas and then assenting to the transformation of visual and linguistic features that have fixed them in this story and canvas, they discover words and images, colours and lines, which can be reconfigured to create a work of art that expresses their new identity. The three pigs and Art are representative of the twenty-first-century artist with an identity beyond self, having escaped what Kenneth Gergen refers to as a 'bounded self' -- discrete, unified, coherent -- and emerging as a 'multi-' or 'relational being.'³ The collapsing of frames, unravelling of lines, vanishing of colours, truncating of words, and dismantling of syntax invite viewers into Wiesner's picturebooks to read visual cues and so join a community of creators and participate in an evolving visual culture.

Key Words: Visual Culture, David Wiesner, identity, self, empathy, framing, white space.

'Why should the creation of pleasure be confined to professionals?' asks Kenneth Gergen in *The Relational Being: Beyond Self and Community*. 'We allow the artist, the poet, and the composer . . . to expand the domain of the pleasurable, to invite and seduce us into new worlds of wonderment -- visual, verbal, auditory, tactile. . . . Why should we not all participate? We did so as children.'⁴ In David Wiesner's picturebooks *The Three Pigs* (2001) and *Art & Max* (2010), storytelling and image-making are a collaborative process engaging author-illustrator,

characters, and readers rather than the autonomous production of a solitary professional. Being collaborative, the process demands that we, the participants, 'learn to be both the teller and the told' -- and the seer and the seen -- 'in the dialogue of the imagination'⁵ by suspending our sense of a discrete, 'bounded self' and reshaping ourselves in accordance with the relationships these books foster.⁶ Once self has been unbounded, identity can evolve as described by Peggy Phelan, 'declaring the boundary where the self diverges from and merges with the other.'⁷ In the space between self and other, a community of visual readers emerges. 'Together, readers, artists and writers create the world of literate seeing,' observes Margaret Meek in *On Being Literate*.⁸

In his 2002 speech accepting the second of three Caldecott Medals that he has earned throughout his career, Wiesner identifies the inspiration for his award-winning version of *The Three Pigs* as a cartoon he watched as a child in which Elmer Fudd chases Bugs Bunny out of the frame of the film: 'they find themselves standing in a blank white space. . . . I was fascinated by the idea that behind the "normal" reality lay this endless, empty, white nothingness.'⁹ It was a concept, Wiesner explains, he returned to explore in his artwork: 'I wanted to be able to push the pictures aside, go behind them or peel them up, and explore the blank expanse that I envisioned was within the books.'¹⁰ What the three pigs and Art and Max discover, however, is not blank space but a community of potential artists who enable stories and images to be reconstructed after the expected stories and conventional images have been deconstructed. Stripping away layers of colour, unravelling lines, experimenting with perspective, and breaching boundaries and frames, Wiesner's *Three Pigs* and *Art & Max* support a concept of the collaborative artist whose process of construction requires the visual acumen of all members of the creative community inside and outside the text.

The opening page of *The Three Pigs* gives no indication of the unconventional turns Wiesner's version will take.¹¹ As readers of text and image, we are led into the tale through the eyes of the wolf as he observes the industrious pigs who seem to have willingly adopted their scripted roles as homeowners and cogs in a D-I-Y home-building and home-protection plot. The composition of this opening page suggests a lack of communal ethos: we locate ourselves with the wolf in the left foreground, who hungrily contemplates the first pig thatching his roof, a miniature scene situated in the picture's middle plane, while his two brothers, depicted humorously as beasts of burden, trudge up the hill in the background and out of the picture on the right to build their own homes of sticks and bricks.¹² We are observing a picture in which 'social relations [are] *represented rather than enacted*' because the 'producer' who is 'absent from the place where the actual communicative transaction is completed . . . cannot say "I" other than through a substitute "I"'¹³ -- the eye of the wolf, whose arched body and long snout point directly at his anticipated prey as does the overhanging pronged tree branch. Unlike the cover image in which the three pigs stare out at us as potential readers

and 'demand' our presence, the images from the first opening are 'offered' to us 'as items of information, objects of contemplation, impersonally, as though they were specimens in a display case.'¹⁴

By the recto of the second opening, it is apparent that Wiesner's *Three Pigs* will not be the story as traditionally told. The text may indicate that the first pig has suffered the usual fate of these characters -- dinner for the wolf -- but the expression and posture of the puzzled and still-hungry wolf and the image of the pig in the foreground, now clutching at straws from the debris of his house and situated between the story's frames, tell a different story that counterpoints in address and style the traditional story the narrator seems to want to articulate. Which shall we trust: words or pictures? 'Clearly, the picturebooks that employ counterpoint are especially stimulating because they elicit many possible interpretations and involve the reader's imagination,' Maria Nikolajeva and Carole Scott conclude in *How Picturebooks Work*.¹⁵ Moreover, in Wiesner's picturebook, images and text have begun to assume a life of their own, seemingly uncontrolled and uncontrollable by the author-illustrator, as the first pig is blown out of the story. To mark this transformation, the artwork becomes more lifelike -- the pig's body more contoured and skin more textured -- and the pig is given his own style of discourse ('Hey! He blew me right out of the story!'), communicated in a new way -- a speech bubble -- and different font.¹⁶ The 'high modality' of these images, as Gunther Kress and Theo van Leeuwen describe more generally, 'produces shared truths' and 'serves to create an imaginary "we"' whose eyes have undergone 'a cultural training' within a specific community of visual readers.¹⁷ Unleashed from their storyboards with prescribed roles as home builders and protectors, the pigs run riot within and between the frames, within and between the pages. For several pages, they have no need for words as they joyfully experience their escape from the story that has been imposed on them for centuries. There is even space for us to join the pigs in their exuberant celebration of freedom on the empty, glossy white pages of the eighth (recto) and ninth (verso) openings. 'When those pigs got behind the pictures,' Wiesner says in his Caldecott Medal acceptance speech, 'they found themselves surrounded by a brilliant, white, overwhelming nothing.'¹⁸ These pages are not, however, passive 'negative space' but active 'white space' into and through which we are guided by an invisible and silent visual narrator.¹⁹

In 1989, Jon Scieszka and Lane Smith rewrote the story of the three pigs from the perspective of A. Wolf, but by pictorially collapsing frames and ripping out pages, Wiesner invites us in to help the pigs re-assemble their world. 'The absence of framing stresses group identity,' assert Kress and van Leeuwen, whereas 'its presence signifies individuality and differentiation.'²⁰ Because the framing and perspectives vary throughout *The Three Pigs* -- single frames, double frames, no frames, broken frames, frames within frames; perspectives from above and below, right and left, far and near -- we are given the opportunity to join the characters in

the fluid game of inside and out and, in so doing, redefine our sense of self as we test our relationships inside and outside the frame. Looking directly out at us, the brown-eyed pig, 'an "intrusive" visual narrator,'²¹ exclaims: 'I think someone's out there.' His two mates have found a nursery-rhyme storyboard, with its own purple font, images (including cute pink pigs), and rhyming discourse. Obviously this is not their own world as the three pigs morph back into their real-pig rotundity and texture. 'Let's get out of here,' one of the pigs advises as they make their escape on the right (requiring a page turn from the reader) and into a black-and-white illustrated tale of a dragon and knight, again with its own style of artwork, font, and inflated medieval rhetoric. By now, both the cat from the nursery rhyme and the dragon from the medieval tale are wandering aimlessly between and behind various storyboards.

When the three pigs stumble across the crumbled pages from their original tale, they decide that they want their old story back, but they are now able to control how this story -- their story -- will end. To conclude this story, a new framed family portrait is taken and mounted on the final page. The crowded scene and wavy text, with the final word (after) cut off (aft), creates an open text, but for the moment, the happiness of this motley crew and neat fairytale ending seem appropriate. It is a scene of celebration to which each contributes: the dragon, a golden rose; the cat, fiddle music; the three pigs, supper and a safe home, having outwitted the wolf, who now sits framed outside their story, perhaps awaiting his own opportunity to rewrite his legendary roles and scripts. 'The beauty of the picture book,' says Wiesner, 'is that despite its seemingly rigid format, it is capable of containing an infinite number of approaches to storytelling.'²² This he has demonstrated by inviting us into the spaces behind the storyboards to deconstruct and then recreate in pictures and words our own versions of this classic tale.

The Three Pigs supports the concept of self as a 'relational being,' a 'vision . . . seek[ing] to recognize a world that is not within persons but within their relationships' and 'ultimately eras[ing] the traditional boundaries of separation,'²³ primarily through the pigs' permutations of shape, texture, and colour as they encounter characters from other storyboards and through the breaking of frames and use of active white space that invite readers to travel with the characters as they re-assemble their story. *Art & Max* also inspires 'the generative processes of relating'²⁴ through collaborative storytelling and image-making; however, it inspires an even more intricate polysystemic approach, whereby, as David Lewis notes generally of picturebooks, we piece together text and image 'out of different kinds of signifying systems' and integrate 'different kinds of meaning drawn from different sources.'²⁵ The flexibility of the picturebook genre, Lewis further suggests, provides opportunities 'for remaking reading' for each generation of emergent readers.²⁶ A reviewer for *School Library Journal* predicts that *Art & Max* 'will generate conversations about media, style, and, of course, "What Is Art?"'²⁷ But with its plain brown-paper end pages tempting embryonic artists to add their

own Jackson Pollock-esque splatters like those found on the book's inside pages, dust jacket, and hard covers, *Art & Max* has the potential to inspire more than conversations.²⁸

Art is the master artist, Max the eager apprentice. Art's preferred medium is portraiture, which persists in the twenty-first century 'in forms which have modulated and sometimes critiqued more traditional portrait representations.'²⁹ In this spirit, Max redefines portraiture as performative body art. *Art & Max* is an exploration of various kinds of painterly media as Max instigates a deconstruction of Art/art from the fissures in the external acrylic layer of paint, caused by Art's explosive temper after Max has taken Art's invitation to 'paint me' all too literally; through the blowing away of the powdery pastels that are found beneath the acrylic paint; to the disappearing of the water-colour layer when Art quaffs water; to Max's unravelling of the lines of the India-ink sketch, the vestiges of Art's body.³⁰ In any kind of performance art, 'the body is metonymic of self, of character, of voice, of "presence."' But in the plenitude of its apparent visibility and availability, the performer actually disappears and represents something else -- dance, movement, sound, character, "art."³¹ In becoming art, Art reshapes his identity.

Wiesner's choice of a low-lying desert landscape with wide expanses of sky provides a theatrical backcloth and stage set for the drama that unfolds³² -- one in which Art's pompous sense of himself as an artist is challenged by his young apprentice. Wiesner's visual and dramatic storytelling reinforces the idea of art as participatory performance as Art, Max, and the three smaller lizards that complete the cast, all depicted with engaging facial expressions and body language, exchange roles from creator to subject to stage hand, from observer to observed, from actor to acted upon. Andrea Schwenke Wyile observes that readers of picturebooks, as with 'participatory theatre,' 'are part audience, part actors, and part director-producer,' all being 'called upon to perform in the production of meaning.'³³ Reading picturebooks such as *Art & Max* and enacting various roles and functions, we rehearse the kinds of relationships we will encounter in life. 'Within any relationship,' Gergen contends, 'we also *become somebody*. That is, we come to play a certain part or adopt a certain identity. . . . Each relationship will bring me into being as a certain sort of person, and the actions that I acquire will enter the repository of potentials for future use.'³⁴

While the multiple frames of the one- and double-page spreads can function as scenes from a play, they can also work as panels in a comic-strip sequence.³⁵ The shifting relationships between the five characters are conveyed entirely through the images and what lies in between the panels, the gutters, rather than through written text. 'Here in the limbo of the gutter,' writes Scott McCloud in *Understanding Comics*, 'human imagination takes two separate images and transforms them into a single idea.'³⁶ Although *Art & Max* depends on the least demanding of transitions -- 'moment-to-moment' and 'action-to-action' rather than, for example, non-sequiturs³⁷ -- these transitions still require that we connect the spaces between the

panels: ‘Within these panels, we can only convey information visually. But between panels, none of our senses are required at all. Which is why all of our senses are engaged.’³⁸ In one panel, we see a Victrola with a Pink Floyd album propped up behind, but between the panels, our imagination hears the experimental and eclectic sounds of *Atom Heart Mother*; in another panel, we see Art’s ‘MAAAAAX!’ in his characteristic charcoal font, now fractured like his epidermal layer, but between the panels, our imagination hears his confused and frightened scream. In one panel, we see Max unravel the lines that remain of Art, but between the panels, we feel what it is like to be invisible and silent; in another panel, we see Max airbrushing his mentor with the paint that once gave Art his distinctive colouring, but between the panels, we feel Art’s amazement and then joy as he experiences his new skin and new identity.

True empathy, ‘the willingness of an observer to become part of another’s experience, to share the feeling of that experience,’³⁹ has been fully realized in both Wiesner’s picturebooks. Because children develop conscious forms of empathy, generated from ‘a sense of others as having a history, an identity, and a life’ different from their own, between the ages of five and eight,⁴⁰ *The Three Pigs* and *Art & Max* are exemplary books for children to experience the life and stories of those different from themselves.⁴¹ But they are also exemplary books for adult readers to re-experience ‘a state of unfamiliarity,’ which Australian picturebook creator Shaun Tan argues is ‘what reading and visual literacy are all about -- and what picture books are good for -- continuing that playful inquiry we began in childhood.’⁴² One of the most challenging states of unfamiliarity for both children and the adults they become is the fluid sense of identity experienced as various relationships shape and reshape self into being. Challenging character stereotypes and deviating from pre-established plot lines, Wiesner’s two picturebooks, both products of the collaborative artist, assume the functions that W.J.T. Mitchell envisions himself adopting as a contributor to and teacher of visual culture, a kind of ‘showing seeing,’ ‘overcom[ing] the veil of familiarity and self-evidence that surrounds the experience of seeing.’⁴³

Notes

- ¹ Marita Sturken and Lisa Cartwright, *Practices of Looking: An Introduction to Visual Culture* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), 3.
- ² Peggy Phelan, *Unmarked: The Politics of Performance* (1993; London: Routledge, 2004), 13, Viewed 17 August 2010, MyiLibrary, <http://lib.myilibrary.com.ezproxy.lakeheadu.ca?ID=5409>.
- ³ Kenneth Gergen, *Relational Being: Beyond Self and Community* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), Viewed 15 August 2010, MyiLibrary, <http://lib.myilibrary.com.ezproxy.lakeheadu.ca?ID=232828>.
- ⁴ Ibid., 124.
- ⁵ Margaret Meek, *On Being Literate* (Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann, 1991), 48.
- ⁶ Gergen describes the ‘bounded’ self as valued for independence, harmony, and coherence, whereas ‘the multi-being is socially embedded, fully engaged in the flow of relationship. . . . Celebrated are the myriad potentials for effective co-action across a broad and disparate field of relationships.’ *Relational Being*, 137.
- ⁷ Phelan, *Unmarked*, 13.
- ⁸ Meek, *On Being Literate*, 117.
- ⁹ David Wiesner, “Caldecott Medal Acceptance,” *Horn Book Magazine* 78 (2002): 394, Viewed 10 January 2011, *Education Full Text, Wilson Web*.
- ¹⁰ Ibid.
- ¹¹ All observations are based on the hard-copy version of David Wiesner’s *The Three Pigs* (New York: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2001), which has no page numbering. Images from the front and back dust jackets, first opening (recto), second opening (recto and verso), and others can be viewed at <http://books.google.com/books?id=mmVFI3WUOgMC>, <http://www.hmhbooks.com/wiesner/threepigs.html>, <http://www.thaolam.com/blog/?p=1429>, and <http://www.booksforkids-reviews.com/2008/04/really-different-3-pigs.html>.
- ¹² Readers schooled in left-to-right script tend to read pictures as they read written text. Maria Nikolajeva and Carole Scott refer to the ‘usual left to right motion’ in a picture, which when reversed brings us back into the story; elsewhere, they comment that ‘the “natural” way to decode movement is left to right, the way we read words. . . . Most picturebook authors seem to have accepted this convention when they arrange the book in a single movement from left to right.’ *How Picturebooks Work* (New York: Routledge, 2006), 31, 153. ‘Because we look first at the left foreground,’ argues Perry Nodelman, ‘we tend to place ourselves in that position and to identify with the objects or figures located there.’ *Words About Pictures: The Narrative Art of Children’s Picture Books* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1988), 135. See also note 14.
- ¹³ Gunther Kress and Theo van Leeuwen, *Reading Images: The Grammar of Visual Design* (London: Routledge, 1996), 121.
- ¹⁴ Ibid., 124. Kress and van Leeuwen also observe that in an “‘offer” picture,’ ‘there often is a sense of complementarity or continuous movement from left to right.’ Moreover, when such design principles are observed, the left side tends to represent the “‘already given,” something the reader is assumed to know already, as part of the culture,’ whereas the right side is the ‘new,’ ‘something which is not yet known, or perhaps not yet agreed upon by the viewer.’ Ibid., 186-87. See note 21 regarding ‘demand’ pictures. It is noteworthy that Wiesner is a graduate of the BFA programme of the Rhode Island School of Design, which he attended from 1974 to 1978.
- ¹⁵ Nikolajeva and Scott, *How Picturebooks Work*, 24. As they make their transition from a discussion of ‘consonant,’ ‘symmetrical,’ and ‘complementary’ relationships between words and images in picturebooks to ‘enhancement and counterpoint,’ Nikolajeva and Scott observe the ‘passive’ reading the former relationships engender when ‘there is nothing left for the reader’s imagination.’ Ibid., 17.
- ¹⁶ Sylvia Pantaleo applies some of the ‘radical changes’ outlined in Eliza Dresang’s *Radical Change: Books for Youth in a Digital Age* (New York: H.W. Wilson Company, 1999) to Wiesner’s *The Three Pigs*: ‘graphics in new forms and formats, words and pictures reaching new levels of synergy, nonlinear and nonsequential organization and format, and interactive format.’ Pantaleo further notes: ‘Readers must “read the illustrations” to notice these transformations because no words in the text describe the changes.’ ‘Young Children and Radical Change Characteristics in Picture Books,’ *The Reading Teacher* 58 (2004): 181, Viewed 23 April 2010, JSTOR, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20205463>.
- ¹⁷ Kress and van Leeuwen, *Reading Images*, 160, 163. Kress and van Leeuwen discuss ‘modality markers’ such as saturation, differentiation, and modulation or shading of colour; pictorial detail; depth, illumination, and brightness. Ibid., 165-67. Some of the remarks that Pantaleo records from her study of twenty Grade 1 students in an inner-city school in British Columbia, Canada, indicate that the ‘cultural training’ for children to equate ‘visual realism’ with ‘naturalism as conventionally understood, “photo-realism”’ (Kress and van Leeuwen, *Reading Images*, 163) has occurred by the time that they enter school: for example, Russell’s comments that when the pig has no hair ‘he’s a fairy tale’ and with hair ‘he’s real’; Hannah’s that, later in the nursery-rhyme storyboard, the characters are ‘getting fake’ and Sebastian’s that ‘they’re turning into cartoons’; and, when the characters exit the nursery-rhyme storyboard, Jeffrey’s conclusions that ‘this one looks real’ and Sebastian’s that ‘he’s going out because he wanted to be real again.’ Pantaleo, ‘Young Children,’ 182.

¹⁸ Wiesner, 'Caldecott Medal Acceptance,' 395.

¹⁹ 'In the context of the story,' Wiesner explains, 'the emptiness creates as much of a sense of place as does an elaborately detailed illustration.' Ibid. Chapter 3 of Scott McCloud's *Understanding Comics* (New York: HarperPerennial, 1994) makes pertinent observations concerning the engagement of the reader through negative space and interstitial spaces such as gutters and page turns.

²⁰ Kress and van Leeuwen, *Reading Images*, 215. Nikolajeva and Scott, *How Picturebooks Work*, 62, concur: 'Framing is an extremely powerful visual element of setting. Frames normally create a sense of detachment between the picture and the reader, while the absence of frames (that is, a picture that covers the whole area of a page or a doublespread) invites the reader into the picture.'

²¹ Nikolajeva and Scott, *How Picturebooks Work*, 119. The pig provides more of an invitation for us to enter into the picture and story than the 'demand' design principles described by Kress and van Leeuwen that 'make viewers engage with some and remain detached from others.' *Reading Images*, 126.

²² Wiesner, 'Caldecott Medal Acceptance,' 396.

²³ Gergen, *Relational Being*, 5.

²⁴ Ibid., xv.

²⁵ David Lewis, 'Going Along with Mr Gumpy: Polysystemy & Play in the Modern Picture Book,' *Signal* 80 (1996): 108-09.

²⁶ Ibid., 111.

²⁷ Wendy Lukehart, review of *Art & Max*, by David Wiesner, *School Library Journal*, 29 September 2010, Viewed 3 January 2011, http://www.schoollibraryjournal.com/slj/home/887004-312/art_max.html.csp. This conversation can occur among all participants, inclusivity being a theme that Wiesner identifies as connecting all his picturebooks. James W. Stiles, 'Behind the Scenes of *Art & Max*: An Interview with David Wiesner,' *Journal of Children's Literature* 36 (2010): 14, Viewed 3 May 2011, *Education Full Text, Wilson Web*. The web site for Wiesner's publisher includes images of models from his studio and sketches from his sketchpads to assist in these conversations. 'Creative Process for *Art & Max*,' Houghton Mifflin Company, Viewed 3 January 2011, <http://www.houghtonmifflinbooks.com/wiesner/process.html>.

²⁸ All observations are based on the hard-copy version of David Wiesner's *Art & Max* (New York: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2010), which has no page numbering.

²⁹ Gen Doy, *Picturing the Self: Changing Views of the Subject in Visual Culture* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2005), 8.

³⁰ Wiesner discusses his creative process and how 'working with different media' developed as the subject matter for *Art & Max* in his interview with Stiles, 'Behind the Scenes of *Art & Max*,' 12-13. Wiesner makes similar observations in a YouTube video, which can be accessed through Houghton Mifflin's web site (<http://www.houghtonmifflinbooks.com/wiesner/art-max.html>). This video is also available through Amazon.com (<http://www.amazon.com/Art-Max-David-Wiesner/dp/0618756639>), as is a more detailed three-part interview with Lauren Nemroff at Amazon's Book Expo America in New York in May 2010. Representative images from *Art & Max* can be found on these web sites.

³¹ Phelan, *Unmarked*, 150.

³² Wiesner observes the different effect that this choice of landscape has in *Art & Max* in comparison to his previous works: 'Dali and de Chirico, in particular, have these running motifs of landscapes with low horizons, big sky, and vanishing points way off in the distance. This was the feel I wanted. . . . *Art & Max* has a single viewpoint throughout: a low horizon about 1/2 to 3/4 of an inch from the bottom of the page with an enormous sky. The effect is like a stage where characters can do their thing. The sky is the canvas on which fantastical things can happen.' Stiles, 'Behind the Scenes of *Art & Max*,' 13.

³³ Andrea Schwenke Wyile. 'The Drama of Potentiality in Metafictional Picturebooks: Engaging Pictorialization in *Shortcut*, *Ooh-la-la*, and *Voices in the Park* (with Occasional Assistance from A. Wolf's *True Story*,' *Children's Literature Association Quarterly* 31 (2006), 177-78, Viewed 26 April 2010, *Project Muse*, doi:10.1353/chq.2006.0045.

³⁴ Gergen, *Relational Being*, 136. Gergen uses the analogy of theatre and acting throughout *Relational Being* and occasionally makes direct comparisons to theatre and argues for theatrical engagement as rehearsal for life (for example, 103, 231-33).

³⁵ Another inspiration for *Art & Max*, Wiesner acknowledges, is that of American cartoonist George Herriman, not only for the desert background from his Krazy Kat series but also for a method to 'frame' the evolving relationship between his characters. Wiesner plays with intertextuality in his first opening with a brick inscribed "Coconino," an allusion to Herriman's Arizona setting of his Krazy Kat series. In particular, Wiesner was attracted by the 'surreal quality' of the region's 'weirdly shaped buttes and mesas.' Stiles, 'Behind the Scenes of *Art & Max*,' 13.

³⁶ McCloud, *Understanding Comics*, 66.

³⁷ Ibid., 70-74.

³⁸ Ibid., 89.

³⁹ Jeremy Rifkin, *The Empathic Civilization: The Race to Global Consciousness in a World in Crisis* (New York: Jeremy P. Tarcher/Penguin, 2009), 12.

⁴⁰ Martin L. Hoffman, *Empathy and Moral Development: Implications for Caring and Justice* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 84.

⁴¹ *School Library Journal* recommends *Art & Max* for K-Grade 4. Lukehart, review.

⁴² Shaun Tan, 'Picture Books: Who Are They For?' Viewed 17 February 2011, <http://www.shauntan.net/comments1.html>.

⁴³ W.J.T. Mitchell, 'Showing Seeing: A Critique of Visual Culture,' in *The Visual Culture Reader*, second edition, edited by Nicholas Mirzoeff (London: Routledge, 2002), 86.

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