

Title: El Visor (The Viewer)

Author: Gary Crew

Illustrator: Shaun Tan

Publisher: Barbara Fiore Editora (Spain)

Year: 2012



Research Background

The research challenge was to create an illustrated narrative responding to the statement ‘We live in an epoch when—not for the first time in history—predictions of world catastrophe are in the air.’ Carr (*What is History?* 1961). *El Visor (The Viewer)* presents an illustrated history of human kind’s ‘catastrophes’ on the disc of a ‘Viewmaster’ (a 1950’s child’s toy) but with one scene missing: a projection of the owner’s future’. It is into this unknown ‘historical void’ (which is possibly catastrophic) that the child viewer is drawn as into the vortex of fate.

Research Contribution

As internationally acclaimed artist/illustrator Shaun Tan writes, ‘It’s clear that older readers, including you and me remain interested in the imaginative play of drawings and paintings, telling stories, and learning how to look at things in new ways.’ This is true for *El Visor* which is intended to encourage teenagers to think about the future of the planet which they inhabit and how their actions may impact upon that future.

Research Significance

El Visor is illustrated by internationally acclaimed artist Shaun Tan. First published in Australia as *The Viewer* (Lothian, Melbourne. 1997), this was Tan’s first full colour hard back illustrated book, winning the Children’s Book Council of Australia Crichton Award for new illustrator which began his illustrious international career. *El Visor* is published internationally by Barbara Fiore Editora; Spain (2011) and Elliott Edizioni; Italy (2011).