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**Ann James** delights in being playful and experimental with the materials she chooses to work with, as clearly evidenced by her illustrations in *I'm a Dirty Dinosaur* (Kane Miller, 2014). When author Janeen Brian first approached her, dirty dinosaur poem in tow, Ann agreed that it had the makings of a picture book. Right from the start she knew she wanted to draw *Dirty Dinosaur* with a magic pencil. Then came the inspiration ... to use "lovely, squishy clay mud!" The result? A brilliantly designed book whose artwork of magic pencil, watercolor and mud is perfectly suited for the text and is a wonderful example of Ann's own description of her style: "character driven and spontaneous, with humor and humanity at heart."



Ann has always drawn pictures, even as a child, and started her career as an art teacher. A love for story coupled with the love of drawing led her to a job creating educational books and magazines for students and teachers. Then in 1980, she and a friend created a picture book, entered a competition and the book was published. Since then Ann has illustrated more than 50 books, several of which she's written herself, with more to come!

While continuing to work on her own projects, Ann and her partner run a gallery for children's book illustration in Melbourne, Australia. Books Illustrated exhibits the work of Australian book illustrators around the world and also sells original artwork and picture books.

If she could be a book character, Ann would chose to be Winnie the Pooh, as originally illustrated by Edward Shepard. "He's a beautifully drawn character, has plenty of friends, is endearing, happy, and wise in his bear-of-little brain way." Her favorite word? "Serendipity is a good word. It's exotic, mysterious and it's a fact of life."

Whether or not Ann's clever idea to use mud in *I'm a Dirty Dinosaur* was serendipitous, the book has been enthusiastically embraced by reviewers, librarians, teachers, parents and most importantly, by children! Many are now wondering ... what happens next to that endearing Dinosaur? And what ingenious idea will Ann have while creating the illustrations?