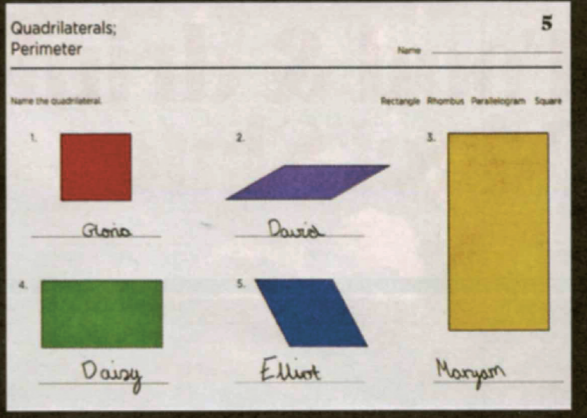
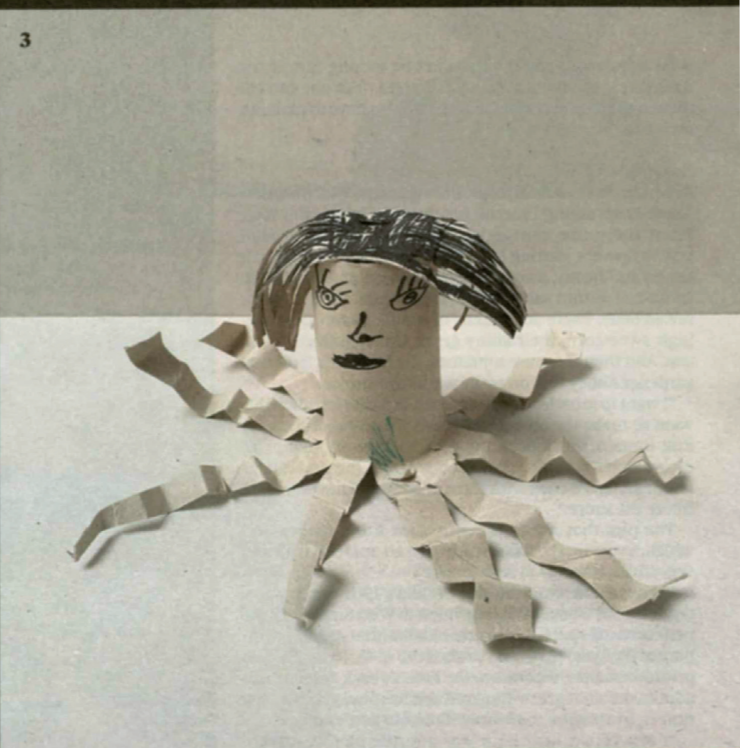




1 I has Binta Swiedin
and you havnt

1. Poster by Emil Porter, aged five, UK: 'Emil found out that as a baby he came on a book tour to Sweden with me,' says his father Max Porter. 'It was a triumphant moment in his relationship with his older brothers'; 2. Dragon by Salam Al Hajeri, aged 10, UAE; 3. Cardboard sculpture by Tekla, aged seven, UK; 4. Drawing by Caroline Connors, 12, USA; 5. Found maths homework, details unknown; 6. Found note, details unknown

Words SEAMAS O'REILLY



6 Dear Mom and Dad dont
bother to give me dinner
in not that hungry

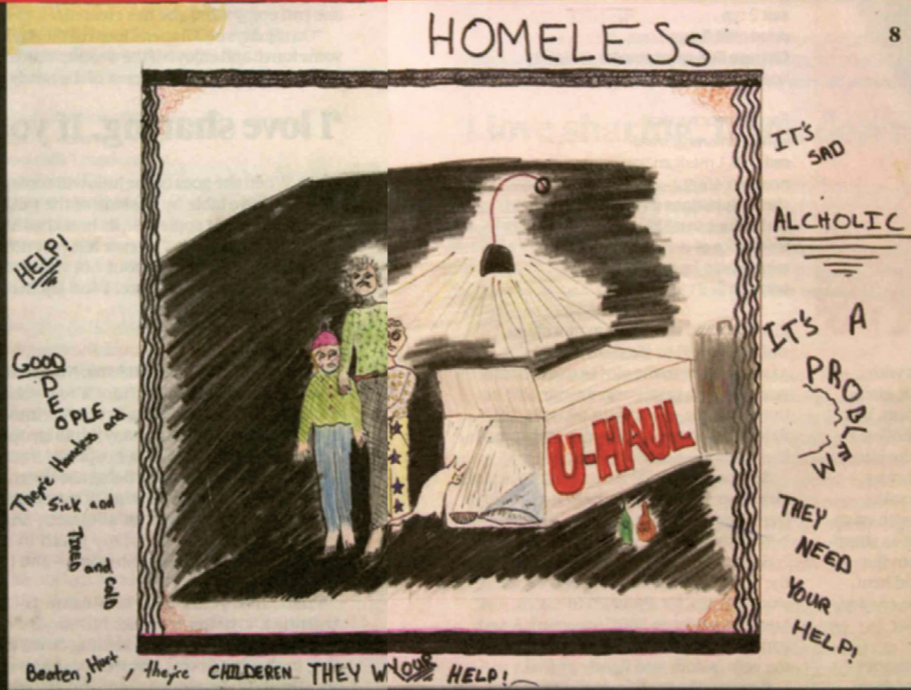
Like From
The saddest
person in the
world

Young at art

Spaghetti legs, flying dinosaurs, ear-to-ear smiles... Children see the world in their own unique, joyful way. The big question is how to hang on to that spark of youthful exuberance as self-consciousness sets in. This new book captures some of the magic...



7. Found note, details unknown; 8. Drawing by Kate Mellin, aged 12, USA; 9. Painting of Aapravasi Ghat (the port where Indian immigrants first landed in Mauritius) by Tanushree Chinnia, aged 12, Mauritius. All images courtesy of the Children's Museum of the Arts and Unesco



7

YES!
I AM ASLEEP
MUM.
LOVE
KELLIG
XXX

Anyone who has spent time with children knows that vertiginous sense of wonder one feels at watching them draw. Fresh like wet clay, their brains create marvels that a team of adults would take weeks to replicate. So it is that my son draws his baby sister as an egg, cut in half by a smile that reaches from ear to ear. She is purple with spaghetti strings for arms and legs, but she is such a perfect likeness for the real thing that we're tempted to use it as her passport photo. As parents, we tread carefully when we say such things. Sure, we all think it, but if not hell, then there is at least a superheated place in family group chats for people who go on about their infants' artistic genius. But we're right, of course, every one of us.

The Gift: from Artists, Poets and Photographers (Under 13) believes in those words wholeheartedly, and its best contents are a treasure trove of naive genius. Picasso's quote, "Every child is an artist - the problem is how to remain an artist once you grow up" - is arguably the most famous assertion of this trope, and familiar to the millions of parents who've clutched their little darling's crayon scrawls a little tighter on the walk home. That we eventually bin those crumpled papers, after a few months' installation on the fridge, perhaps speaks to how hard it is to remember its message. Already, my son is starting to compare his work with others. Perhaps he will soon be copying everyone else and dampening his stranger impulses to fit in. But for now, the marvels are all his own. The bin shall stay empty, and the fridge will overflow. ■

The Gift from Artists, Poets and Photographers (Under 13), edited by Julian Rothenstein, is published by Redstone Press on 22 September at £12.95 (theredstoneshop.com)

