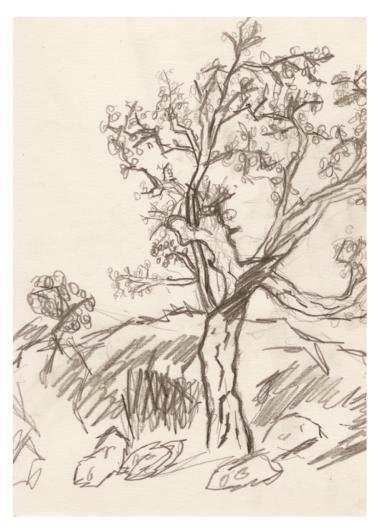# A few words about Paul Ostroverhy...

Being a professional artist, it was natural for me to raise my children with art and beauty. Whilst I was training my older sons in the different techniques of the visual arts, Paul, being the youngest, was often left to his own imaginations.

Still participating in all our travel adventures and artistic activities, he managed to learn, to observe and make his own conclusions about how things ought to be. It was instinctive for him from his younger age to take a pencil and draw the rest of his apple after dinner, "because Pierre Bonnard was doing it," or after hiking up a 2500m high Alpine pick, exhausted, but happy, to take out a sketchpad and draw the breath-taking view, "because John Ruskin did the same."

Having not received a formal artistic training, art was still in his life everyday.

So we were not really astonished when we saw his studies of the trees he did at the age of ten. The expressionist style of the branches, the meticulously detailed treatment of the leaves or the foggy representation of the background; all indicated that Paul had an innate artistic sensibility. He was using challenging concepts without having been formally taught them.

Paul started to study new languages in the same way he learned to draw. Arriving in England at the age of nine, after one year he spoke English with a Bristolian accent. He considered this as just another "artistic technique" to learn.

While walking on the beach, biking in the mountains with his brothers, Paul slowly discovered what he called "his thoughts of a philosopher". Without the rush and stress of city life or any school obligations, Paul learned how to fill his time with interesting projects. By using "google earth" he managed to travel the world and create his first "extended project": an imaginary land "a la" Tolkien, called "Ostroco". It included hundreds of drawings, maps, sketches, historical data and even its own numerical system.

As at that time his older brothers were preparing their English exams, Paul involuntarily listened to "The Picture of Dorian Gray" and received his first literary emotion from "Macbeth". The result was rather surprising: "The Painting with Dust", a 7,000 word first literary experiment which he dictated online (being still very slow in typing) to his English tutor back in Australia.

Paul continued to conquer literary classics. He devoured more than 200 books, wrote his first anthology of poems and finally created his biggest achievement so far: a 62,000 word detective novel "The Diamond of the Chess player".

After finishing his second novel Paul discovered the art of editing. For six months he would sit down every day after school and spend a couple of hours editing the text. He learned to express his thoughts with clarity, and correct grammar.

To finish this page with a funny note, Paul didn't speak until the age of three and was eight when he learned to read and write. But the first sentence he ever pronounced was already a "literary beginning": "Once upon a time, there was a very very gentle dog...".

Serge Ostroverhy