



Q&A with Steve Chorney

Illustrator of the

BASEBALL CARD ADVENTURES series

How do you choose the image for the cover?

Herein lies my biggest problem. Since Dan's books are often crammed with many thousands of words, it is difficult to imagine just one picture to portray his colorful stories. So we keep it simple; the famous baseball star and a small scene with the player and Stosh, our hero.

Is the image of Stosh based on a real person?

I have often used neighborhood kids to pose as Stosh for the artwork. They have been very happy to help me, since they know of Mr. Gutman's books already. The trouble with kids, though, is this: They grow up all too fast! And then I must find another Stosh.

How do you create the cover itself?

This is my favorite part—painting the picture! After we have all agreed on the sketches of the scene to be used, I begin making a large and very precise drawing of the characters. Next comes the acrylic paints to add life and color to the painting. Finally, the last stage will take as long as the first two in detailing all the fine points with small brushes and sharp pencils. I use many types of brushes—including an airbrush and even a toothbrush at times! All this is done on a kind of poster board as much as four times larger than the size you see on the cover. That makes my work look really detailed when seen so small.

Then what happens?

After sending the publisher a digital copy of the artwork, my job is complete. I sit on my hands out here along the sunny central coast of California till the next Baseball Card Adventure begins. I keep all the original paintings and am hopeful one day there will be a Dan Gutman Literary Museum, in which case I would be proud to hang the originals on the walls.

Did you always want to be an artist?

It is all I ever wanted to be since my earliest of memories. My father was an artist also, and as a small boy I would often sit on his knee as he painted a picture at his easel. I could not think of anything more important to do with my life than to be like my father! After this many years, I can honestly say I have never been disappointed with that decision. Thanks, Dad!

A BASEBALL CARD ADVENTURE

HARPER

An Imprint of HarperCollinsPublishers

www.awesomeadventurebooks.com/dangutman

Permission to reproduce and distribute this page has been granted by the copyright holder, HarperCollins Publishers. All rights reserved.