



**Strictly embargoed until 12:01am Monday, 21<sup>st</sup> September**

## **Waterstone's Announces Winner of 'Picture This'**

**Undiscovered illustrator will work with  
UK's bestselling picture book author**

*London, 21<sup>st</sup> September 2009...* Karen George, an undiscovered illustrator from London and graduate of the Royal College of Art, has been named the winner of Waterstone's and Macmillan Children's Books 'Picture This' competition. She beat over 900 aspiring artists to take the prize of working with the biggest name in children's picture books, Julia Donaldson.

'Picture This' invited undiscovered talent to submit art based on the text to an original story by Julia Donaldson, author of *The Gruffalo*, *Tyrannosaurus Drip*, *Princess and the Wizard* and many other bestselling picture books. The complete, never before seen text of *Freddie and the Fairy* was revealed in full on [Waterstones.com](http://Waterstones.com) in April of this year. A panel of experts, led by Julia Donaldson and including her agent Caroline Sheldon and her Macmillan Children's Books editor Suzanne Carnell, Waterstone's picture book buyer Kate Skipper, children's writer and illustrator Lauren Child (Charlie and Lola, Clarice Bean) and Daily Telegraph writer and children's book reviewer Cassandra Jardine chose a shortlist of 6 artists, who were then challenged to submit further work on the book before the winner was chosen. Karen George receives a full publishing contract, with advance and royalties, to illustrate *Freddie and the Fairy*, a charming tale of a boy and a hard-of-hearing fairy told in Donaldson's trademark rhythmic rhyme.

Waterstone's Kate Skipper believes Karen George has a glittering career in front of her; "Karen is a wonderful new talent, and now has an amazing opportunity. Her first book will be with the undisputed Queen of children's picture books, and will be a bestseller for Waterstone's when published in 2010."

Julia Donaldson, who announced Karen George as the winner at the launch of the Bath Festival of Children's Literature, looks forward to working with her new illustrator. "I am very pleased that Karen has won. She has a warm, appealing and distinctive style that I think will complement the text of *Freddie and the Fairy* perfectly."

Karen George, a mother of two, said, "It has long been my ambition to illustrate picture books for children. I never dreamed I would start by working

with the biggest and best name in the business! I cannot wait to show my own children a finished copy when it is published next year.”

Freddie and the Fairy, by Julia Donaldson and Karen George, will be published by Macmillan Children’s Books in Autumn 2010.

#### **Notes for editors**

##### **Waterstone’s**

Waterstone’s is the UK’s leading specialist bookseller with over 300 branches in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, as well as branches in Eire, in Amsterdam and Brussels, on the Isle of Man and Jersey. Its transactional website Waterstones.com was launched in 2006, and there are currently over 2.5 million holders of the Waterstone’s Card. Waterstone’s was named Bookselling Company of the Year at the Bookseller Retail Awards 2008, and High Street Retailer of the Year at the 2009 Awards.

##### **Julia Donaldson**

Julia Donaldson is one of today’s most popular children’s writers. Her many best-selling collaborations with Axel Scheffler include *The Gruffalo’s Child* and *The Snail and the Whale*. Julia loves to write plays and songs, and her brilliant children’s shows are always in demand.

##### **Macmillan Children’s Books**

Macmillan Children’s Books is one of the UK’s leading children’s publishers. A division of Pan Macmillan Publishers, Macmillan Children’s Books publishes over 300 books a year for all age groups and is the publisher of international bestselling titles such as *The Gruffalo* by Julia Donaldson and Axel Scheffler, *The Princess Diaries* series by Meg Cabot and *Dear Zoo* by Rod Campbell. Macmillan Children’s Books has won many major awards for its publishing including the Carnegie and Kate Greenaway Medals, the Nestlé Children’s Book Prize and the Blue Peter and Red House Book Awards. Her latest book, with Axel Scheffler, is *Tabby McTat*, published by Macmillan Children’s Books.

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