



## **Waterstone's announces shortlist to become the next big name in children's illustrating**

*London, 10<sup>th</sup> June, 2009...* An ex-army jungle expedition planner, a picture framer and a world record holder are among the shortlisted entrants for Waterstone's and Macmillan Children's Books Picture This competition, the bookseller announced today.

In April, Waterstones.com gave readers the chance to read a brand new story from Julia Donaldson, bestselling author of books including *The Gruffalo*, *Sharing a Shell* and *Tyrannosaurus Drip*. Aspiring children's book illustrators were invited to illustrate an image from the story as well as show how they would illustrate the key characters in the story, titled *Freddie and the Fairy*. The prize would be a publishing contract to fully illustrate the story for publication by Macmillan Children's Books in Autumn 2010.

Waterstone's received over 900 entries, from which a shortlist of 6 was chosen by a panel of experts including Julia Donaldson, her agent Caroline Sheldon and editor Suzanne Carnell, Waterstone's Picture Books 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.

The shortlisted entrants are;

- Rod Waters, a 42 year old freelance illustrator from London and father of one, who holds a Guinness World Record for cycling between Paris and London in just over 14 hours in 1997. He says "when I heard about the competition and read the story I knew it was perfect for me. I am putting my heart and soul into it."
- Esther Johnson, a 24 year old from Winsford, currently a picture framer at the Church Hill Gallery in Knutsford, who graduated with a BA in Illustration from the University of the West of England.
- Alex Paterson, a 39 year old ex-army officer and jungle expedition planner from Epsom who now works as a civil servant by day but is "an

illustrator as soon as I get on the train home – with a dream of full time illustration.”

- Anna Collison, a 23 year old bookseller from Liverpool who graduated from Manchester Metropolitan University last summer with a degree in illustration and animation.
- Karen George, a 43 year old artist from London, graduate of the Royal College of Art and mother of two, who has long held an ambition to write and illustrate picture books.
- Maria Nilsson, a 30 year old full time mum from London with a BA in Illustration from the University of Westminster who says “to illustrate a story for Julia Donaldson would be a dream come true.”

Examples of the shortlisted artists work will be displayed in Europe’s largest bookstore, Waterstone’s in Piccadilly from 10 – 21 August.

Julia Donaldson said of the artists’ work, “We have a really exciting shortlist with talent from all over the country and a good variety of illustration styles and techniques. I’m very much looking forward to seeing what they all produce for the next round.”

The six must now provide full colour artwork for two more pages from the book, plus sketches for the remainder. The winner will be chosen in August and announced at the start of the Bath Children’s Literature Festival on 18 September.

#### **Notes for editors**

#### **Picture This Key Dates**

**Winner announced at Bath Festival of Children’s Literature Sept 18<sup>th</sup> – 27<sup>th</sup> September**

**Freddie and the Fairy published – October 2010**

**Please note: the competition was only open to those who have not previously published a full-colour children’s book or book cover anywhere in the world**

**Discover more at [Waterstones.com/picturethis](http://Waterstones.com/picturethis)**

#### **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](http://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.**

#### **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.**

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