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MANDY HAGER WINS THE PRESTIGIOUS STORYLINES MARGARET MAHY MEDAL

Multi-award-winning Wellington-based author Mandy Hager is the winner of the 2019 Storylines Margaret Mahy Medal for life-time achievement and a distinguished contribution to New Zealand's literature for young people.

Best-known as a writer of young adult fiction, Mandy Hager has also written fiction and non-fiction for younger children, and for educational programmes. In 2017 she published her first adult novel, the historical novel *Heloise*, long-listed for New Zealand's premier adult Ockham Book Awards.

"We're delighted to announce Mandy as the Storylines Margaret Mahy Medal winner. Over a 20-year-plus career she has written a succession of outstanding and thought-provoking young adult and children's novels as well as film scripts and short stories," says Christine Young, chair of the Storylines Children's Literature Trust. "She is an outstanding writer, with many well-deserved accolades, and has acted as a role model for many younger writers, as well as an inspiring mentor to students in classrooms across the country and in her creative writing classes."

From the publication in 1995 of *Tom's Story* for Mallinson Rendel, and for nearly every work of fiction since, Mandy Hager has achieved the unusual feat of winning a major award or being shortlisted. She has also been extensively published by major US publishers.

Her awards include the LIANZA Book Awards for Young Adult fiction three times (*Smashed*, 2008; *The Nature of Ash*, 2013; *Dear Vincent*, 2014), the New Zealand Post Children's Book Awards for YA fiction (*The Crossing*, 2010), USA's Golden Wings Excellence Award (*Juno Lucina*, 2002), Golden Wings Award (*Run For The Trees*, 2003) and five Storylines Notable Book Awards.

In 2015, for her novel *Singing Home the Whale*, she was awarded the Margaret Mahy Book of the Year award, and the Best Young Adult Fiction Award at the New Zealand Book Awards for Children and Young Adults. This novel was also chosen by Storylines (as the International Board on Books for Young People (IBBY) New Zealand section) as its 2016 IBBY Honour Book for Writing, an international award. Other notable titles include the *Blood of the Lamb* trilogy, *Dear Vincent*, and her latest *Ash Arising*, a sequel to the acclaimed thriller *The Nature of Ash* (2012).



Mandy Hager has also featured in international awards for her film scripts: runner-up in Feature Film Screenwriting Competition for *Crossing the Boundaries* at River City Film Festival, 2003, and Finalist for *Smashed*, full length film script adaptation in the Moondance International Film Festival, USA, 2008.

In 2012 she was awarded the New Zealand Society of Authors' Peter and Dianne Beatson Fellowship; in 2014 Katherine Mansfield Fellowship to Menton, France, and in 2015 she was Waikato University's Writer in Residence.

A trained teacher, Mandy Hager holds an Advanced Diploma in Fine Arts from Whitireia Community Polytechnic, an MA in Creative Writing from Victoria University, and has taught Novel Writing at the Whitireia's Creative Writing programme. She has appeared at all New Zealand's major writers' festivals and is a regular visitor to schools

The Storylines Margaret Mahy Medal award was begun in 1991, and is regarded as New Zealand's most prestigious award in children's books for authors, illustrators and publishers, acknowledgement of an outstanding contribution to New Zealand's literature for young people. Previous winners have included Joy Cowley, Lynley Dodd, David Hill, Kate De Goldi, illustrators Gavin Bishop and David Elliot and publisher Ann Mallinson.

The Margaret Mahy Medal will be presented to Mandy Hager at the Storylines Trust annual Storylines Margaret Mahy National Awards Day in Auckland on **Sunday 31 March, 2019**.



Mandy Hager is available for interview.

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<http://www.storylines.org.nz>