



Margaret Mahy

**Candidate for the
Hans Christian Andersen Award for Writers, 2006**

Nominated by the New Zealand National Section, IBBY

Dossier prepared by the New Zealand IBBY Section

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September 2005

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Section 1

Biographical information on the candidate

Margaret Mahy (1936–) was born and raised in Whakatane, New Zealand, the eldest of five children. Her father, a bridge builder, told stories and read to his children; her mother had been a teacher. She had a largely happy childhood, excelling at school in English and as a swimmer. Her first publications were at the age of seven, in the children's pages of the *Bay of Plenty Beacon*.

Mahy worked as a nurse's aide for six months before beginning study at Auckland University College (1952–54) and Canterbury University College (1955), graduating BA in English and Philosophy. In 1958, with her diploma from the New Zealand Library School in Wellington, she embraced librarianship with enthusiasm, at Petone Public Library, near Wellington and with the School Library Service in Christchurch. Appointed Children's Librarian at the Canterbury Public Library in 1976, she resigned in 1980 to become a full-time writer.

With five picture books launched simultaneously by Franklin Watts in New York and Dent in London in 1969, Margaret Mahy has continued over nearly four decades to add to a unique body of work, remarkable for its phenomenal range: over 100 picture books, serious and comic novels for both children and young adults, anthologies of stories and poetry, plays and scripts for television for both adults and children, and more than 150 stories for the international educational market. In recent years she has become equally acclaimed as an essayist, reviewer and commentator. With books translated into more than fifteen languages, and constantly in demand as a favourite speaker at international conferences since 1975, she is regarded internationally as one of the very greatest fantasists, and picture book writers and young adult writers of the 20th century.

Among her many awards are Britain's Carnegie Medal twice (1982, 1984), the American May Hill Arbuthnot Lecture award (1989), and multiple book awards and prestige listings in New Zealand, England, USA, Italy and Holland. In 1993 she was awarded New Zealand's highest civil honour, the Order of New Zealand, and an honorary Doctorate in Letters from the University of Canterbury. The first recipient of the AW Reed Lifetime Achievement Award given by the New Zealand publishing industry in 1997, she has also lent her name to the Margaret Mahy Medal and Lecture Award given by the Storylines Children's Literature Foundation of New Zealand.

In 2005, aged 69 and still publishing as prolifically as ever, she was awarded the Canadian Children's Literature Association's Phoenix Award for *The Catalogue of the Universe*; inducted by the Arts Foundation of New Zealand as a Living Icon (one of only twenty across all the arts); and awarded her second honorary doctorate of letters.

A collection of her major speeches and interviews was published as *A Dissolving Ghost* in 2000, and she was the subject of a major 'literary history' (*Margaret Mahy: a writer's life*, Auckland: HarperCollins) by fellow New Zealand children's writer Tessa Duder in 2005.

Margaret Mahy lives in Governors Bay, Lyttelton, and has two daughters and six grandchildren.

Section 2



Margaret Mahy

Section 3

Margaret Mahy: her lasting contribution to literature for young people

Approaching seventy and though inevitably the twilight of her remarkable career, Margaret Mahy is indisputably one of the world's most inventive, versatile and prolific writers for both children and young adult readers.

In a career which now spans four decades as a published author, Mahy has produced more than two hundred books and as many journal stories, as well as non-fiction, poetry, plays and television scripts; for adults, there has also been a steady stream of commentary, essays and reviews.

There is an extraordinary duality about her work and her achievements. She is the only writer outside Britain to have won the coveted Carnegie Medal twice, and the only writer from the southern Pacific to have won the Canadian Children's Literature Association's Phoenix Award for a work published, but not an award winner, twenty years earlier (*The Catalogue of the Universe*).

She has been renowned since 1969 as one of the world's greatest writers of picture books for very young children, yet during the 1980s became regarded as an outstanding, ground-breaking novelist for young adults. She writes fantasy novels and picture book texts of breathtaking audacity, yet can turn her hand to compassionate social realism with equal success. She can write in the comic knock-about tradition of Edward Lear and WS Gilbert, but equally well in the great tradition of English poetic and descriptive lyricism.

Although best known as a writer for the young, she has been contributing major scholarly speeches to librarian, teacher and academic conferences (and their published proceedings) since 1973. In recent years, her essays and commentary have appeared in a wide range of publications (e.g. *A Dissolving Ghost*,

Essays and More, published by Victoria University Press, Wellington, 2000), building a parallel career as a highly respected commentator, reviewer and essayist on children's and young adult literature.

The subject of serious critical studies since the mid-1980s, Mahy's fiction continues to attract growing academic attention, as evidenced by a new collection of essays by leading American, British, Australian and New Zealand academics in children's literature, published as *Marvellous Codes: the Fiction of Margaret Mahy*, edited by Drs Elizabeth Hale and Sarah Winters (Victoria University Press, Wellington, September 2005).

Perhaps her finest achievement, however, is drawing on the centuries-old traditions of ancient myth and European folklore to create 20th century stories of brilliant originality, freshness and durability. Raised in the 'new world' but deeply absorbed since earliest childhood in the stories of the 'old', she has created her own Mahy world where the two are joyfully and positively fused. The power of her fantasy comes from being always grounded in reality, always experienced by recognisable characters and told in language universally admired for its metaphorical richness, subtlety, humour, irony, elegance and musicality.

'Every book is a celebration of life,' says fellow New Zealand writer Joy Cowley.* 'Margaret Mahy's view is of a seamless world. Her characters are whole beings. The reader is often taken on a roller-coaster ride from reality to fantasy and back again as though no barrier exists between the two. This is developed further in her novels where the interconnectedness of worlds

* Joy Cowley is, after Margaret Mahy, New Zealand's second-highest decorated writer, with top civil, academic and literary recognition. Author of adult short stories and novels, and award-winning books for children, she is known worldwide, especially in the United States, Asia and Australia/New Zealand, as the writer of 'school readers' for children's literacy programmes.

seen and unseen becomes the vehicle for surprise, entertainment and intellectual extension. With superb skill Margaret Mahy deals with the thorny issues of childhood and adolescence without ever taking the reader into bleak territory.

'Many of her books are set in New Zealand but it is the landscape of the mind that is her true territory and a large part of her global appeal. Cultural furnishings are simply part of her stage set: it's her characters who create meaning and magic. Springing from the universal child, they leap over boundaries of conditioning, holding up small mirrors of truth to the reader. Whatever truth a Mahy character presents, we can be sure that it is usually embedded in humour, and is always kind.

'The hallmark of Mahy writing must be her originality. With more than two hundred books published, she still surprises with every story. Her freshness of concept and language defy formulae: however, there are certain elements which are found repeatedly in Mahy works: the juxtapositions of fantasy and reality, the earnest and the comic, the ordinary and the absurd, are all laced together with richly inventive and sometimes irreverent language which begs the reader to take another look at a traditional point of view.

'Surely no other writer for children and young adults has produced such a wide range of work, nor such a phenomenal number of memorable, magical books, in over thirty years of writing.'

Mahy's contribution to world literature goes further, however, into the world of international literacy. Her large output of 'school readers', small books for literacy programmes, is widely used in New Zealand (a country known for its skills in literacy teaching) and around the world in English and a number of translations. Her contribution, through these miniature masterpieces, to providing story-based pleasure and reading confidence for literally millions of children world-wide is immeasurable.

An indefatigable traveller for more than thirty years in the cause of storytelling and reading, she

has constantly visited schools in New Zealand, Australia and, on occasion, Britain, America, China, Japan and others to enchant children with her stories and her famous multi-coloured storyteller's wigs. She continues to accept nearly every invitation she receives to speak at teachers' and librarians' conferences and literary festivals, in many countries and often at the cost of her own writing. She is renowned throughout New Zealand and Australia for her support of other authors, teachers and librarians, for her generosity and her readiness to be interviewed whether on her own account or in support of another writer, or school, or literary or literacy event, or children's cause. She is patron of the Children's Heart Foundation and of the Storylines Children's Literature Trust of New Zealand, whose Margaret Mahy Medal, now in its 15th year, is the country's most prestigious literary award for children.

New Zealand has bestowed on its most beloved writer nearly every possible honour: the highest civil honour, the Order of New Zealand, the highest award for artists (both these restricted to twenty living persons), two honorary doctorates, the 2005 Prime Minister's Writers' Award, President of Honour of the New Zealand Society of Authors (PEN NZ Inc.), among others.

The Hans Christian Andersen Award would recognise that at seventy, with four decades of publishing to her name, Margaret Mahy has made a unique, rich and lasting contribution to the world of young persons' literature. It would honour a writer who will surely delight, guide and enrich the lives of many generations in the future, as she has already done for today's readers and two generations in the past.

Section 4

Appreciative essays

‘Upside down look at the young world’

Article by noted Australian commentator Walter McVitty
in Melbourne’s *The Age*, 2 February 1986

Walter McVitty is a leading Australian publisher, reviewer and commentator on children’s books

Twenty years ago Margaret Mahy’s work was known only to children in New Zealand, through the short pieces she wrote for the first-rate magazine produced by the Government for use in schools. In 1968 the New York publishers Franklin Watts saw her 26-line story *A Lion in the Meadow* and immediately offered her a contract for everything she had written in the previous 15 years and gave her a hefty advance against royalties.

Such confidence has since been repaid by millions of children the world over. With over 40 books to her credit, Margaret Mahy is now one of the most popular and prolific of children’s authors. She is also one of the best. With the exception of English writer Jan Mark, I would say that she is probably without peer today.

Margaret Mahy’s books are full of delightful invention, in ideas as well as language. They offer great fun for children by turning everything upside down. Stereotypes are challenged, as rollicking old women become pirates in madcap Mahy worlds populated with dragons, robbers, magicians, witches, robots and assorted unruly but likeable people.

Three recent releases serve to demonstrate her great range. *Jam* (Dent), the simplest, is a picture book about a man who takes over the running of the household when his scientifically minded wife is offered a job in research (a typical Mahy joke, to find a medicine to cure sunspots). He becomes obsessed with making plum jam, which the family feels obliged to eat to excess. (It also comes in handy for mending leaking roofs and sticking down bathroom tiles.)

The Man Whose Mother Was a Pirate (Dent) has just been reissued in an entirely new picture-book edition, with Margaret Chamberlain’s drawings replacing those by Brian Froud. It is about a meek accountant who runs off to sea with his roisterous mum, a lapsed pirate, in spite of warnings of people along the way. ‘Go back, go back, little man,’ says the philosopher. ‘The wonderful things are never as wonderful as you hope they’ll be. The sea is less warm, the joke is less funny, the taste is never as good as the smell.’ Mum knows better of course.

I suppose what Margaret Mahy is against, if anything, is the nay-saying wowser. Without ever saying so, her books, however simple, are affirmations of life; set your mind free of its shackles and reach out, grab it and embrace it, making it yours.

And the wonderful things *can* be as wonderful as you hope they’d be, as I discovered in reading *The Catalogue of the Universe* (Dent).

This is the third and latest of Margaret Mahy’s full-length novels for older readers (in this case intelligent and literate teenagers, say 14 to 16). I read it with great anticipation and have re-read it with growing wonder, appreciation and enjoyment — and shall continue to do so for years to come.

Margaret Mahy’s previous two novels, *The Haunting* (1982) and *The Changeover* (1984) were so accomplished, so full of sparkling ideas and language, so multi-layered and profound in their explorations of life and relationships that they both took out the Carnegie Medal, against all opposition,

in the UK. Unless the judges deem *The Catalogue of the Universe* to be out of the range of ‘children’, it too seems certain to be this year’s winner.

Stated very simply, it is about an ‘illegitimate’ teenage girl who succeeds in tracking down and confronting her father for the first time. Believing herself to have been a true love-child, the beautiful Angela May is devastated by the rebuff she receives and is forced to accept a reality far removed from childhood myths and romantic notions.

If this were all the book amounted to it would be unexceptional. But this is merely the central incident around which, to use an appropriate metaphor, everything else revolves. It is that ‘everything else’ which makes reading this book, sharing its discussions and events with its characters, and reflecting long upon them, such a deeply rewarding experience for readers prepared to allow themselves to be drawn into it. For the author’s real interest is in relationships — between Angela and her mother and with Tycho Potter, a scientifically minded school friend, and within Tycho’s own crazy family.

Angela lives with her loving, permissive mother in an old shack, isolated on top of a hill overlooking the town below. She describes her mother thus: ‘It’s not as if she’s a real eccentric. I mean she’s not what I’d call colourful. It is more as if she was on loan from another planet, almost like ours but not quite — a sort of near miss.’

That’s exactly the way I would describe the author herself. Eccentric is certainly not the word for Margaret Mahy. She does, however, have such an extraordinary intellect, combined with rare insights into human nature and such a breathtaking control of words, that one could easily believe her gifts to be supernatural. She expresses ideas in the most carefully crafted felicitous prose — which never takes itself too seriously, being enlivened by a constant undercurrent of humour.

She has described her approach thus: ‘I think highly of true rationality which I see as having more emotional and intuitive components than is commonly

acknowledged. I think humour has a more spiritual function than many people are prepared to admit.’

The temptation to quote copiously from Margaret Mahy’s work is hard to resist — but where would one stop? Here’s just one sample, part of a description of a walk by Angela and Tycho through the town:

In one deep, wide doorway framed in reflecting glass so that they were accompanied by their own ghosts, a gang of young men had collected, their motorbikes, a string of iron monsters, stabled along the edge of the footpath. They wore denim jackets with the sleeves torn out, and their strong arms, bared to the city air, were tattooed with skulls, naked women, and tigers being strangled by serpents. Tycho did not dare to meet the eyes of these men, some of them very little older than he was, in case they read something there at which they might take offence. Feeling furtive and cowardly, he became convinced he was approaching a tribe of true men, all illustrated with the signs of violence and violation, while he was an imitation creature protected by nothing but an Ionian view of the world — the belief that things might be understood, and that he might attain wonderful power at last through struggling to understand them. Angela, however, seemed to increase in self-confidence approaching the doorway, as if she knew that, during daylight hours at least, she had power over the true men, that her long legs in their tight jeans would carry her triumphantly past, desirable but unobtainable. Tycho heard their conversation stop as she walked by, there was a second or two of silence and then, from behind, a chorus of whistles and howls burst out. Angela stopped and turned and faced her admirers, which made the cries first hesitate, then increase in volume. Yet there was something almost good-natured suddenly on both sides; as if by mutual acknowledgement Angela and the young men had established an understanding in common, and were prepared to be entertained by one another. All Tycho felt was the great unease of an animal in another animal’s territory.

One doesn’t come across writing of that calibre every day, but Margaret Mahy’s three novels are full of it, on page after page. Only Jan Mark, in my experience, can match her — but that’s another story.

From *Children's Literature* (the Blackwell Guides to Literature, Oxford, UK, 2001) by Peter Hunt

Professor Peter Hunt of UK's Bristol University includes Margaret Mahy in his collection of short essays on 38 key 19th and 20th century children's writers and illustrators in English. Apart from Australia's Patricia Wrightson, she is the only writer included from outside Britain and North America.

If there is one author whose work belies the old critical adage that children's literature cannot sustain serious critical examination, it is New Zealand's foremost children's author, Margaret Mahy. As Anne Lawrence-Pietroni put it, 'Mahy's work serves to destabilise expectations of character as self-contained and complete.'

Mahy's work is characteristically self-referential and unstable; she parodies the very forms that she uses. Prolific and erratic, her writing is genuinely 'child-centred', and at all 'levels' she focalizes tightly through her child characters; theirs is the real, valid and self-justifying world. Her situation *vis-à-vis* criticism mirrors this: her writing does not seem to have the intellectual discipline of say, a Jill Paton Walsh or an E.L. Konigsburg, but possibly as a result, it contains highly suggestive, interwoven levels of complexity that are increasingly regarded as a challenge to serious critics.

It would be difficult to find a novel — anywhere — which makes more subtle use of the metafictional than Mahy's *The Tricksters*, in which the ideas of carnival (made explicit by three characters with the surname Carnival) and life imitating art are explored through complex family and time relationships. It can be very persuasively argued that although Mahy seems to use conventional forms, her work is resolutely postmodernist, frequently (or perhaps pervasively) feminist, and continually deals in margins and eccentricities, mirroring the conflicting expansions of the adolescence.

Frequently, forms blend. *The Changeover* (1984), for example, appears to be a naturalistic psychological novel about Laura's relationship with her mother, suggestively overlaid with a supernatural premise, an incubus regenerating itself by taking over

Laura's younger brother. This unlikely combination is played out in unremarkable suburbia in terms of an adventure, but its constant ambiguities and questioning of what is real and what (if anything) is fantastic allow it to be read as an examination of the nature of truth and reality:

Outside in the city, traffic lights changed colours, casting quick spells of prohibition and release. Cars ... set off ... through the maze of the Gardendale subdivision, a labyrinth in which one could, after all, find a firebird's feather, or a glass slipper or the footprints of the minotaur quite as readily as in fairy tales, or the infinitively dividing paths of Looking-Glass land.

For Mahy, even apparently totally realistic texts have metaphysical implications. Among the best of these is *Memory*, centring around a disturbed young man, Jonny, and an old lady suffering from Alzheimer's disease. As Heather Scutter notes, Mahy's persistent concern with women and girls 'writing the world' emerges here: 'One of Mahy's chief feminist strategies is to represent, through the perceptions of Jonny, the female world as other and then to deconstruct his understanding of that otherness.'

Lissa Paul has pointed out in a comparison of *The Changeover* with Burnett's *The Secret Garden* that Laura's female quest is an example of the patterns identified by Annis Pratt (1992). Not only does Mahy write at a time when 'it is possible to succeed in a man's world, and where nurturing instincts need not be devalued', but in combining the male quest and the 'female' sentimental romance readers 'are alerted to the fact that the conventions of sentimental romances are in operation in serious fiction'.

Some flavour of Mahy's work can be found in this characteristic passage from *The Catalogue of the Universe* (1985): Angela watches her mother scything by moonlight. As she does continually, Mahy plays with the possibilities of indeterminate symbolism and the ambiguity of the complexities of life:

Angela could see the entranced, semi-circular swing of her shoulders, heard the whisper of the keen steel and the sigh of long grass bowing down before her. Everything around her was drenched in a light so clear and so intense it seemed as if it must have more substance than ordinary light. It was the very light of visions and prophecies ... Angela could plainly see that Dido's own eyes were so flooded with moonlight that she was radiantly blind, a fairy-tale woman who, having lost her own sight, had been given pale, shining eyes of silver ...

Like the road, Dido had a dangerous edge and sometimes she went right out to it and danced, apparently challenging it to crumble away under her. Angela feared for such a reckless dancer, though by now she knew that she, too, had an inside road as well as an outside one, and dangerous edges of her own ... But whatever Dido challenged by dancing on dangerous edges was no sort of happiness Angela could recognize.

This serious playfulness is not confined to her novels for teenagers. *The Librarian and the Robbers* (1978), to take a random example, is not merely farce; it is also, perhaps, a gently feminist and anarchist parody of the adventure genre.

Something of a phenomenon in New Zealand and international publishing, an indication of Mahy's status is that in 1993 she was awarded New Zealand's high civil honour — the Order of New Zealand — for her writing. She has won the British Carnegie Medal twice (*The Haunting*, 1982, *The Changeover*, 1984). For younger children (and of course, discerning adults) she has developed an interesting line in apparently inconsequential picture-book texts (*A Lion in the Meadow*, 1969, *The Boy Who Was Followed Home*, 1975; *Jam*, 1985) which play with the borderlines between fantasy and reality

and sometimes with those between the adult and the child (*Keeping House*, 1991). This is quite apart from the huge number of 'readers' that she has produced for the New Zealand Department of Education, and stories for *School Journal*, which almost certainly need to be liberated from the 'education' ghetto.

Margaret Mahy

Paul Heins, *Twentieth-Century Children's Writers*,
3rd edition, Chicago, St James Press, 1989

Margaret Mahy has proved to be an unusually versatile story teller. Although two Carnegie Medals have in recent years brought her renown as a writer of novels, she first made her mark as the author of picture-book texts and of simple narratives. Despite the different focuses required by these various genres, Mahy constantly employs unlikely situations to engage the attention of her readers — children or teenagers — and the resulting stories and novels combine elements of realism and fantasy inventively, exuberantly, and at times comically; they are almost always tinged with verbal richness.

Generally, Mahy's picture-book texts combine a commonplace down-to-earth situation with an intrusive element of the unbelievable or the unlikely to give the story a certain amount of narrative piquancy. In *The Boy Who Was Followed Home* a schoolboy is trailed one day by a single hippopotamus but on subsequent days by hippopotamuses who continue to increase dramatically in number. *A Lion in the Meadow* invokes an interesting relationship between the different kinds of thought processes of a boy and his mother. And in *The Boy with Two Shadows*, a witch chooses a schoolboy to care for her shadow during her absence, causing him and his own shadow endless embarrassments until she rewards him handsomely for his trouble.

Mahy's comparatively short, simple tellings exhibit her characteristic method and naturally give her scope for amplification. These narratives begin simply, and quickly strike at the heart of the events....

Without entirely deserting picture-book and story texts, Mahy has since 1982 developed into a writer of full-fledged novels. Not only did *The Haunting* and *The Changeover* each receive a Carnegie Medal, but she went on to write three more novels that are individually significant — *The Catalogue of the Universe*, *The Tricksters*, and *Memory*.

In the two Carnegie Medal winners, Mahy exploited her customary feeling for possible interconnections between realism and fantasy. *The Haunting*, the story of a close-knit intergenerational family, centres on Barney, who believes he is being visited by the ghost of a supposedly long-dead relative; but it turns out that it is not he but his repressed and silent older sister who has inherited the family's genetic potential for extraordinary psychic experiences. *The Changeover*, set in 20th-century urban New Zealand, combines an unlikely set of circumstances — Laura's ambivalent feelings towards her divorced mother and her young brother Jacko's illness caused by the possession of an evil spirit.

In *The Catalogue of the Universe*, a realistic love story with no trace of the supernatural, Angela, born out of wedlock, seeks and finds — with unhappy results — her father and is ultimately consoled by the love of Tycho Potter, who is tremendously intellectual but lacking in self-confidence. Employing an elusive supernatural element in *The Tricksters*, Mahy tinges the Christmas vacation of the large Hamilton family at their seaside home with a touch of the uncanny when they are suddenly visited and as suddenly abandoned by three brothers claiming to be descendants of the original builder of the house.

It is noteworthy that Barney, the protagonist of *The Haunting*, is eight years old, while Laura Chant, the protagonist of *The Changeover*, is 14. As the novels succeed each other, the protagonists increase in age. Angela May in *The Catalogue of the Universe* is 18 years old; Ariadne, called Harry, in *The Tricksters*, is 17; and Jonny Dart in *Memory* is 19. And Mahy utilizes the subtle methods of the novelist to present the problems and experiences of teenagers who are aware of their sexuality and are at the same time increasingly concerned about the relationship between love and sex.

Made of intricately woven plot strands and rich in verbal texture, the novels cannot be encapsulated in any single generalization, but a number of discernible elements are common to them all.

Although the stories are set in New Zealand, they evoke, on the whole, an international 20th-century ambience in which divorced parents, single-parent families, and even Alzheimer's disease are part of the social fabric, along with shopping malls, television, portable radios, and wrecked cars. Yet in *Memory* there are references to the existence of Maori problems in the contemporary life of New Zealand. Frequently, the lives of individuals and families are invaded by supernatural and/or psychological manifestations — ghosts, witchcraft, illusive or elusive characters. Yet each novel deals with human destinies and is at the same time replete with humor, rich imagery, and emotional perception. In these novels the uncanny may assume variable forms — not only the ghost in *The Haunting*, the possession by an evil spirit in *The Changeover*, the unexplainable appearance and departure of the three brothers in *The Tricksters*, but also such matters as the influence of ancient Greek philosophers on the character Tycho Potter in *The Catalogue of the Universe* and the appearance of a boy from outer space in the science-fiction novel *Aliens in the Family*.

In her exuberant combinations of the extraordinary and the ordinary Mahy has skillfully combined plot strands in obbligator form. In *The Changeover*, *The Catalogue of the Universe*, and *The Tricksters* the sexuality of the protagonists — always presented emotionally and perceptively but never physiologically — is only part of a larger family story in which character conflicts are generally resolved. But in *Memory*, where the uncanny consists essentially of psychological and physiological considerations, Mahy most successfully bonds her double-stranded story. Jonny Dart, unemployed and rebellious against society, suffers from a feeling of unsubstantiated guilt caused by the death of his sister when he was 14. Searching for her friend Bonny, who might reveal

the truth to him, Jonny comes upon an old lady, Sophie West, suffering from Alzheimer's disease and helps her home. He begins to feel a need to aid and support her because of the unsavory conditions of her living quarters and becomes concerned about bringing order into her life. Jonny's flashbacks of past events and feelings are played against the absurdly outrageous yet genuinely pathetic statements of Sophie; and as the story moves to its denouement, not only is Sophie properly cared for but Jonny undergoes experiences that are cathartic and ultimately redemptive. In addition to having pared down her narrative complexities to a single strand, Mahy has employed language that overrides the possibility of unimaginative sordidness in her account of two kinds of mental distress.

Mahy's versatility as a story teller cannot be considered merely as a progression from the simple to the complex. Even in her picture-book texts and uncomplicated traditional narratives she worked with the basic elements that she continued to develop later in other ways: realism and fantasy, humor and a sensitivity to words — to what they do and what they mean. In her novels she has established the 20th-century world as it manifests itself in New Zealand; and, not surprisingly, this world seems little different from many other parts of the globe. But in choosing to write about contemporary situations involving families and young adults, she has mastered the oblique narrative methods of the novelist; and gracefully avoiding the tragic, she has attained success as a writer of what could certainly be considered high comedy tinged with fantasy.

Section 5

Awards and other distinctions

International awards

- Een Zilveren Griffell (Holland), 1978
- International New York Film Festival 1989, gold medal for TV drama *Strangers*
- May Hill Arbutnot Lecture Award (Association for Library Service to Children), Pittsburg, USA, 1989

International awards for individual books

The Haunting

- Carnegie Medal (UK) 1982
- A Best Book of the Year (School Library Journal)

The Changeover: a supernatural romance

- Carnegie Medal (UK) 1984
- IBBY Honor Book Award 1986
- A Notable Children's Book (American Library Association)
- A Best Book for Young Adults (ALA)
- A Best Book of the Year (SLJ)
- Editor's Choice (*Booklist*)
- The *Horn Book* Fanfare List

The Catalogue of the Universe

- Editor's Choice (*Booklist*)
- The *Horn Book* Fanfare List
- Phoenix Award, Children's Literature Association (Canada), 2005

Memory

- The Observer Teenage Fiction Award (UK) 1987
- Carnegie Medal, runner-up (UK) 1987
- Boston Globe/Horn Book Award, Honor Book (USA)
- A Best Book of the Year (SLJ)
- Editor's Choice (*Booklist*)
- The *Horn Book* Fanfare List

The Tricksters

- A Best Book for Young Adults (ALA)
- A Best Book of the Year (SLJ)
- The *Horn Book* Fanfare List

Dangerous Spaces

- The *Horn Book* Fanfare List
- Parenting's Reading Magic List (USA)
- Children's Book of the Year, Child Study Children's Book Committee at Bank Street College (USA)
- Books for Children, Children's Literature Center in the Library of Congress (USA)

Underrunners

- A Notable Children's Book (ALA)
- Editor's Choice (*Booklist*)
- Bulletin of the Center for Children's Books, 'Bulletin Blue Ribbon' (USA)

New York Public Library, '100 Titles for Reading and Sharing' (USA)

Children's Book of the Year, Child Study Children's Book Committee at Bank Street College (USA)

The *Horn Book* Fanfare List (USA)

24 Hours

- Guardian* Fiction Award shortlist (UK) 2001
- The *Horn Book* Honor List 2001 (USA)

Awards in New Zealand

General awards

- Writers' Fellowship, University of Canterbury, 1984
- New Zealand Literary Fund Lifetime Achievement Award, 1985
- Margaret Mahy Medal and Lecture Award, for a distinguished contribution to children's literature, New Zealand Children's Book Foundation, 1991 (first recipient)
- The Order of New Zealand 1993, for her contribution to world children's literature (New Zealand's highest civil honour, restricted to 20 living persons)
- Honorary Doctorate of Letters, University of Canterbury, 1993
- AW Reed Lifetime Achievement Award, New Zealand, 1999 (first recipient)
- President of Honour, New Zealand Society of Authors (PEN NZ Inc.), 2002
- Sylvia Ashton-Warner Fellowship, Auckland College of Education, Inaugural Fellow, 2002
- Honorary Doctorate of Letters, University of Waikato, 2005
- Icon Award, Arts Foundation of New Zealand (restricted to 20 living persons across all the arts), 2005

Awards for individual books

A Lion in the Meadow (1970), *The First Margaret Mahy Story Book* (1973), *The Haunting* (1983), *The Changeover: a supernatural romance* (1985), *Underrunners* (1993), *24 Hours* (2001) — all winners of the Esther Glen Medal (New Zealand Library and Information Association's award for a distinguished contribution to children's literature).

Underrunners, AIM Children's Book of the Year, Junior Fiction, 1993

A Summery Saturday Morning, New Zealand Post Children's Book Awards, Supreme Book of the Year and Picture Book, 1999

A Villain's Night Out, New Zealand Post Awards, Junior Fiction Honour Book, 2000

24 Hours, New Zealand Post Awards, Honour Book, Senior Fiction, 2001

Alchemy, New Zealand Post Awards, Senior Fiction Winner, 2002

Section 6

Chronological bibliography in English, 1966–2006

Novels and major short story collections are marked in bold and blue; otherwise entries are for picture books. (Picture books reissued with new illustrations are entered separately.)

Small books intended for 5 to 9-year-old classroom literacy programmes are included in this bibliography, because Margaret Mahy has always insisted that these are as important in her overall body of work as books for the 'trade' (i.e. booksellers') market. Indeed, she often chooses to write some of her best story ideas as 'school readers' so that the book will be available for classroom use, and thus reach a wider range of children from differing socio-economic backgrounds.

Literally millions of these small books (here marked as SR) have been sold in many countries, in a variety of languages, making a major contribution to children's literacy world-wide.

1966

The Wind Beneath the Stars, *School Journal* Part 3, no. 3 — collection of Margaret Mahy stories and poems, illustrated by Jill McDonald. Wellington: Department of Education.

'The Boy Who Went Looking for a Friend'

'"Small Porks"'

'Pillycock's Shop'

'Mrs Discobobulus'

'The Ghastly Nightmare or The Butcher's Dream' (poem)

'When the King Rides By' (poem)

'The Princess and the Clown'

'The Wind Between the Stars'

'The Witch Dog'

1969

A Lion in the Meadow, illustrated by Jenny Williams. New York: Franklin Watts; London: Dent; Woodstock: Overlook Press (1992). (Revised edition with new illustrations and ending, 1986)

The Dragon of an Ordinary Family, illustrated by Helen Oxenbury. New York: Franklin Watts; London: Heinemann. (Revised edition, 1991)

Pillycock's Shop, illustrated by Carol Barker. New York: Franklin Watts; London: Dobson.

The Procession, illustrated by Charles Mozley. New York: Franklin Watts; London: Dent.

Mrs Discobobulous, illustrated by Jan Brychta. New York: Franklin Watts; London: Dent. (Originally published as 'Mrs Discobobulus', *School Journal*, Part 3, no. 3, 1966)

1970

The Little Witch, illustrated by Charles Mozley. New York: Franklin Watts; London: Dent.

Sailor Jack and the 20 Orphans, illustrated by Robert Bartelt. New York: Franklin Watts; London: Dent.

1971

The Princess and the Clown, illustrated by Carol Barker. New York: Franklin Watts; London: Dobson.

The Boy with Two Shadows, illustrated by Jenny Williams. New York: Franklin Watts; London: Dent. (Revised edition, 1987)

1972

The First Margaret Mahy Story Book, illustrated by Shirley Hughes. London: Dent. (Collection of 13 stories and 15 poems, most published first in *School Journal*)

17 Kings and 42 Elephants, illustrated by Charles Mozley. London: Dent. (Poetry) (Revised edition, 1987)

The Man Whose Mother Was a Pirate, illustrated by Brian Froud. London: Dent; New York: Atheneum (1973) (Revised edition, 1985) (Originally published as 'The Little Man Who Went To Sea', *School Journal*, Part 2, no. 4, 1962)

1973

The Second Margaret Mahy Story Book, illustrated by Shirley Hughes. London: Dent. (14 stories and 4 poems)

The Railway Engine and the Hairy Brigands, illustrated by Brian Froud. London: Dent.

1974

The Bus Under the Leaves, illustrated by Margery Gill. London: Dent, 1974. (Short junior novel) (Originally published under the title 'The Old Bus', *School Journal*, Part 2, no. 5, 1964)

Clancy's Cabin, illustrated by Trevor Stubbley. London: Dent. (New edition illustrated by Barbara Steadman, Woodstock: Overlook Press, 1995) (Short junior novel)

Rooms for Rent, illustrated by Jenny Williams. New York: Franklin Watts; London: Dent (1975, under title *Rooms to Let*). (Originally published as 'Mr Murgatroyd's Lodgers' in *School Journal*, Part 2, no. 3, 1969)

The Rare Spotted Birthday Party, illustrated by Belinda Lyon. London: Franklin Watts.

The Witch in the Cherry Tree, illustrated by Jenny Williams. London: Dent; New York: Parents' Magazine Press.

Stepmother, illustrated by Terry Burton. London: Franklin Watts.

1975

The Third Margaret Mahy Story Book, illustrated by Shirley Hughes. London: Dent.

Ultra-Violet Catastrophe or The Unexpected Walk with Great-Uncle Magnus Pringle, illustrated by Brian Froud. London: Dent; New York: Parents' Magazine Press.

Leaf Magic, illustrated by Jenny Williams. New York: Parents' Magazine Press; London: Dent (1976). (Originally published as 'The Follower' in *School Journal*, Part 1, no. 4, 1973)

The Great Millionaire Kidnap, illustrated by Jan Brytcha. London: Dent.

The Bus Under the Leaves, illustrated by Margery Gill. London: Dent.

The Boy Who Was Followed Home, illustrated by Steven Kellogg. New York: Franklin Watts; London: Dent (1977).

New Zealand: Yesterday and Today, illustrated by Jim Robins. New York: Franklin Watts. (Non-fiction, with photographs and line drawings)

1976

A Lion in the Meadow and Five Other Favorites, illustrated by Jenny Williams, Robert Bartelt, Jan Brytcha, Charles Mozley, Brian Froud and Molly Lovejoy. London: Dent. (Collection of stories from *School Journal* published as picture books; with new illustrations)

The Wind Between the Stars, illustrated by Brian Froud. London: Dent.

Leaf Magic, illustrated by Jenny Williams. London: Dent; New York: Parents' Magazine Press (1977).

David's Witch Doctor, illustrated by Jim Russell. London: Franklin Watts.

1977

Nonstop Nonsense, illustrated by Quentin Blake. London: Dent; London: Magnet (1986); New York: Margaret McElderry (1989).

The Pirate Uncle, illustrated by Mary Dinsdale. London: Dent; Woodstock: Overlook Press (1994). (Junior novel)

Look under 'V', illustrated by Deidre Gardiner. Wellington: School Publications Branch, Department of Education. (Non-fiction/fiction)

1978

The Great Piratical Rumbustification & The Librarian and the Robbers, illustrated by Quentin Blake. London: Dent; Boston: Godine (1986).

Dry Days for Climbing George, illustrated by Judith Trevalyn. Wellington: Department of Education, School Publications.

1979

Nonstop Nonsense, illustrated by Quentin Blake. London: Dent; New York, Margaret McElderry. (Collection of stories about the Delmonico family)

1981

Raging Robots and Unruly Uncles, illustrated by Peter Stevenson. London, Dent; New York: Overlook Press (1993). (Junior novel)

1982

The Haunting. London; Dent; New York: Athenaeum. (Junior novel)

The Chewing-Gum Rescue and Other Stories, illustrated by Jan Ormerod. London: Dent; London: Methuen (1984); Woodstock: Overlook Press (1991).

Brrm Brrm!, illustrated by Bob Kerr. Wellington: School Publications Branch, Department of Education. (SR)

The Crocodile's Christmas Jandals, illustrated by Deidre Gardiner. Wellington: School Publications Branch, Department of Education. (SR) (Published as *The Christmas Crocodile's Thongs*, Melbourne: Nelson, 1985)

Roly-Poly, with Joy Cowley and June Melser, illustrated by Deidre Gardiner. Auckland: Shortland; Leeds: Arnold-Wheaton (1985). (SR)

Cooking Pot, with Joy Cowley and June Melser, illustrated by Deidre Gardiner. Auckland: Shortland; Leeds: Arnold-Wheaton (1985). (SR)

Fast and Funny, with Joy Cowley and June Melser, illustrated by Lynette Vondrusha. Auckland: Shortland; Leeds: Arnold-Wheaton (1985). (SR)

Sing to the Moon, with Joy Cowley and June Melser, illustrated by Isabel Lowe. Auckland: Shortland; Leeds: Arnold-Wheaton (1985). (SR)

Tiddalik, with Joy Cowley and June Melser, illustrated by Philip Webb. Auckland: Shortland; Leeds: Arnold-Wheaton (1985). (SR)

1983

The Pirates' Mixed-Up Voyage: Dark Doings in the Thousand Islands, illustrated by Margaret Chamberlain. London: Dent; New York: Dial Books. (Junior novel)

A Crocodile in the Library, illustrated by Deidre Gardiner. Wellington: School Publications Branch, Department of Education. (SR)

A Crocodile in the Garden, illustrated by Deidre Gardiner. Wellington: School Publications Branch, Department of Education. (SR)

Mrs Bubble's Baby, illustrated by Diane Perham. Wellington: School Publications Branch, Department of Education. (SR)

The Bumbling Crocodile, illustrated by Deidre Gardiner. Wellington: School Publications Branch, Department of Education. (SR)

Shopping with a Crocodile, illustrated by Deidre Gardiner. Wellington: School Publications Branch, Department of Education. (SR)

1984

The Changeover: A Supernatural Romance, London: Dent; New York: Athenaeum. (Young adult novel)

Leaf Magic and Five Other Favourites, illustrated by Margaret Chamberlain. London: Dent; Auckland: Waiaatarua.

The Birthday Burglar & A Very Wicked Headmistress, illustrated by Margaret Chamberlain. London: Dent; Boston: David Godine (1988).

Fantail, Fantail, illustrated by Bruce Phillips. Wellington: School Publications Branch, Department of Education. (SR)

Going to the Beach, illustrated by Dick Frizzell. Wellington: School Publications Branch, Department of Education. (SR)

The Great Grumbler and the Wonder Tree, illustrated by Diane Perham. Wellington: School Publications Branch, Department of Education. (SR)

The Dragon's Birthday, illustrated by Philip Webb. Auckland: Shortland. (SR)

The Spider in the Shower, illustrated by Rodney McRae. Auckland: Shortland. (SR)

Ups and Downs and Other Stories, illustrated by Philip Webb. Auckland: Shortland. (SR)

Wibble Wobble and Other Stories. Auckland: Shortland. (SR)

1985

The Catalogue of the Universe, London: Dent; New York: Athenaeum. (Young adult novel)

Aliens in the Family, London: Methuen; Auckland: Scholastic; New York: Scholastic; London: Hippo (1996). (Junior novel)

Jam: A True Story, illustrated by Helen Craig. London: Dent; Boston: Atlantic Monthly Press (1986).

A Crocodile in the Garden, illustrated by Deidre Gardiner. Wellington: School Publications Branch, Department of Education. (SR)

Horrakopotchin, illustrated by Fiona Kelly. Wellington: School Publications Branch, Department of Education. (SR)

The Adventures of a Kite, illustrated by David Cowe. Auckland: Shortland; Leeds: Arnold-Wheaton (1986). (SR)

The Cake, illustrated by David Cowe. Auckland: Shortland; Auckland: Leeds: Arnold-Wheaton (1986). (SR)

The Catten, illustrated by Jo Davies. Auckland: Shortland; Leeds: Arnold-Wheaton (1986). (SR)

Clever Hamburger illustrated by Rodney McRae. Auckland: Shortland; Leeds: Arnold-Wheaton (1986). (SR)

A Very Happy Birthday, illustrated by Elizabeth Fuller. Auckland: Shortland; Leeds: Arnold-Wheaton (1986). (SR)

The Earthquake, illustrated by Dianne Perham. Auckland: Shortland; Leeds: Arnold-Wheaton (1986). (SR)

Sophie's Singing Mother, illustrated by Jo Davies. Auckland: Shortland; Leeds: Arnold-Wheaton (1986). (SR)

Out in the Big Wide World, illustrated by Rodney McRae. Auckland: Shortland. (SR)

Rain, illustrated by Elizabeth Fuller. Auckland: Shortland. (SR)

1986

The Tricksters, London: Dent; New York: Margaret McElderry Books (1987). (Young adult novel)

A Lion in the Meadow, illustrated by Jenny Williams. London: Dent. (New edition with revised ending and new illustrations)

The Man Whose Mother Was a Pirate, illustrated by Margaret Chamberlain. London: Dent. (New edition, with revised text and new illustrations)

Mahy Magic: A Collection of the Most Magical Stories from the Margaret Mahy Story Books, illustrated by Shirley Hughes. London: Dent. (Collection of 18 stories with magic themes) (Published as *The Boy Who Bounced and Other Magic Tales*, London: Puffin, 1988)

My Wonderful Aunt (four volumes), illustrated by Deidre Gardiner. Auckland: Wendy Pye (revised edition in one volume); Chicago: Children's Press (1988)

The Downhill Crocodile Whizz and Other Stories, illustrated by Ian Newsham. London: Dent. (Collection)

Arguments, illustrated by Kelvin Hawley. Auckland: Shortland. (SR)

Beautiful Pig. Auckland: Shortland; Leeds: Arnold-Wheaton (1987). (SR)

The Fight on the Hill, illustrated by Jan van der Voo. Auckland: Shortland; Leeds: Arnold-Wheaton (1987). (SR)

An Elephant in the House, illustrated by Elizabeth Fuller. Auckland: Shortland. (SR)

Jacko, the Junk Shop Man, illustrated by Jo Davies. Auckland: Shortland. (SR)

The Long Grass of Tumbledown Road, illustrated by Elizabeth Fuller. Auckland: Shortland; Leeds: Arnold-Wheaton (1987). (SR)

The Mouse Wedding, illustrated by Elizabeth Fuller. Auckland: Shortland. (SR)

Mr Rooster's Dilemma, illustrated by Elizabeth Fuller. Auckland: Shortland. Published in UK as *How Mr Rooster Didn't Get Married*, Leeds: Arnold Wheaton (1987). (SR)

The Robber Pig and Green Eggs, illustrated by Rodney McRae. Auckland: Shortland; Leeds: Arnold-Wheaton (1987). (SR)

The Robber Pig and the Ginger Beer, illustrated by Rodney McRae. Auckland: Shortland; Leeds: Arnold-Wheaton (1987). (SR)

Squeak in the Gate, illustrated by Jo Davies. Auckland: Shortland. (SR)

Tinny Tiny Tinker, illustrated by David Cowe. Auckland: Shortland. (SR)

Baby's Breakfast illustrated by Madeleine Beasley. Auckland: Wendy Pye. (SR)

Feeling Funny, illustrated by Rodney McRae. Auckland: Wendy Pye. (SR)

The Garden Party illustrated by Rodney McRae. Auckland: Wendy Pye. (SR)

The Trouble with Heathrow, illustrated by Rodney McRae. Auckland: Wendy Pye. (SR)

Mr Rumfit, illustrated by Nick Price. Auckland: Wendy Pye. (SR)

Muppy's Ball, illustrated by Jan van der Voo. Auckland: Wendy Pye. (SR)

The New House Villain, illustrated by Elizabeth Fuller. Auckland: Wendy Pye. (SR)

A Pet to the Vet, illustrated by Philip Webb. Auckland: Wendy Pye. (SR)

The Pop Group, illustrated by Madeline Beasley. Auckland: Wendy Pye. (SR)

The Man Who Enjoyed Grumbling, illustrated by Wendy Hodder. Auckland: Wendy Pye. (SR)

Tai Taylor is Born, illustrated by Nick Price. Auckland: Wendy Pye. (SR)

Tai Taylor Goes to School, illustrated by Nick Price. Auckland: Wendy Pye. (SR)

Tai Taylor and His Education, illustrated by Nick Price. Auckland: Wendy Pye. (SR)

Tai Taylor and the Sweet Annie, illustrated by Nick Price. Auckland: Wendy Pye. (SR)

The Terrible Topsy-Turvey, Tissy-Tossy Tangle, illustrated by Vicki Smillie-McIoull. Auckland: Wendy Pye. (SR)

The Tree Doctor, illustrated by Wendy Hodder. Auckland: Wendy Pye. (SR)

Trouble on the Bus, illustrated by Wendy Hodder. Auckland: Wendy Pye. (SR)

The Trouble with Heathrow, illustrated by Rodney McRae. Auckland: Wendy Pye. (SR)

The Funny Funny Clown Face, illustrated by Miranda Whitford. Auckland: Wendy Pye. (SR)

The Three Wishes (with others), illustrated by Rodney McRae and others. Auckland: Shortland. (SR)

1987

Memory. London: Dent; New York: Margaret McElderry. (Young adult novel)

The Boy with Two Shadows, illustrated by Jenny Williams. London: Dent; New York: J.B. Lippincott. (New edition: revised text and new illustrations by same illustrator)

17 Kings and 42 Elephants, revised edition illustrated by Patricia MacCarthy. London: Dent; New York: Dial. (Poetry)

The Horrible Story and Others, illustrated by Shirley Hughes, London: Dent. (Collection of 21 stories, not included in *Mahy Magic*, from the three *Margaret Mahy Story Books*)

The Little Witch and Five Other Favourites, illustrated by Jenny Williams, London: Penguin. (Originally published as *A Lion in the Meadow and 5 Other Favourites*, 1976)

The Tin Can Band and Other Poems, illustrated by Honey De Lacey. London: Dent.

The Haunting of Miss Cardamom, illustrated by Korky Paul. Auckland: Wendy Pye. (SR)

Guinea Pig Grass, illustrated by Kelvin Hawley. Auckland: Shortland. (SR)

Iris La Bonga and the Helpful Taxi Driver, illustrated by Vicki Smillie-McIoull. Auckland: Wendy Pye. (SR)

The Girl Who Washed in Moonlight, illustrated by Robyn Belton. Auckland: Wendy Pye. (SR)

The Man Who Walked on his Hands, illustrated by Martin Bailey. Auckland: Shortland. (SR)

No Dinner for Sally, illustrated by John Tarlton. Auckland: Shortland. (SR)

The Mad Puppet, illustrated by Jon Davis. Auckland: Wendy Pye. (SR)

The King's Jokes, illustrated by Val Biro. Auckland: Wendy Pye. (SR)

The Tree Doctor, illustrated by Wendy Hodder. Auckland: Wendy Pye. (SR)

1988

The Door in the Air and Other Stories, illustrated by Diana Catchpole. London: Dent; New York: Delacorte (1991). (Young adult short stories)

When the King Rides By, illustrated by Bettina Ogden, Cheltenham (UK): Stanley Thomas; New York: Mondo (1995).

The Boy Who Bounced and Other Magic Tales, illustrated by Shirley Hughes. London: Penguin. (Collection originally published as *Mahy Magic* by Dent, 1986)

The Baby-sitter, illustrated by Bryan Pollard. Auckland: Shortland. (SR)

As Luck Would Have It, illustrated by Deirdre Gardiner. Auckland: Shortland. (SR)

A Not-so-quiet-evening, illustrated by Glenda Jones. Auckland: Shortland. (SR)

Sarah, the Bear and the Kangaroo, illustrated by Elizabeth Fuller. Auckland: Shortland. (SR)

1989

The Blood-and-Thunder Adventure on Hurricane Peak, illustrated by Wendy Smith. London: Dent; New York: Margaret McElderry. (Junior novel)

The Great White Man-Eating Shark: A Cautionary Tale, illustrated by Jonathan Allen. London: Dent; New York: Dial (1990).

Chocolate Porridge and Other Stories, illustrated by Shirley Hughes. London: Penguin. (Originally published as *The Horrible Story and Others*, Dent, 1987)

The Tin Can Band and Other Poems, illustrated by Honey De Lacey. London: Dent. (Poetry)

Trouble in the Supermarket, illustrated by Trish Hill. Melbourne: Thomas Nelson Australia. (Collection of nine stories, plus biographical information and author comment)

1990

The Seven Chinese Brothers, illustrated by Jean and Mousien Tseng. London: Macmillan; New York: Scholastic.

Making Friends, illustrated by Wendy Smith. London: Dent; New York: Margaret McElderry.

The Pumpkin Man and the Crafty Creeper, illustrated by Helen Craig. London: Cape; New York: Lothrop Lee and Shepard.

Crocodile Crocodile, illustrated by Celia Canning. Auckland: Wendy Pye. (SR)

The Little Round Husband, illustrated by Val Biro. Auckland: Wendy Pye. (SR)

White Elephants, illustrated by John Bendall-Brunello. Auckland: Wendy Pye. (SR)

The Solar System, illustrated by Jeff Fowler. Auckland: Wendy Pye. (Non-fiction) (SR)

The Library at the End of the World: a vision musical commissioned by the Court Theatre, Christchurch with assistance from the 1990 Commission and the QEII Arts Council, libretto by Margaret Mahy, music by Dorothy Buchanan (unpublished).

1991

Dangerous Spaces, London: Hamish Hamilton; New York: Viking. (Junior novel)

Bubble Trouble and Other Poems and Stories, illustrated by Tony Ross. London: Hamish Hamilton; New York: Margaret McElderry (with illustrations by Margaret Mahy).

Keeping House, illustrated by Wendy Smith. London: Hamish Hamilton; New York: Margaret McElderry.

The Queen's Goat, illustrated by Emma Chichester Clark. London: Hamish Hamilton; New York: Dial.

The Dentist's Promise, illustrated by Wendy Smith. Sydney: Omnibus Books; London: Hippo (1994).

The Dragon of an Ordinary Family, illustrated by Helen Oxenbury. London: Heinemann; New York: Dial. (New edition with revised text)

A Tall Story and Other Tales, illustrated by Jan Nesbitt. London: Dent; New York: Margaret McElderry (1992). (Collection of 11 stories previously published in the First, Second and Third *Margaret Mahy Story Books*)

Giant Soup. Wellington: School Publications Branch, Department of Education. (SR)

Surprising Moments: the Inaugural Margaret Mahy Award Lecture. Auckland: New Zealand Children's Book Foundation.

1992

Underrunners, London: Hamish Hamilton; New York: Viking. (Junior novel)

A Tall Story and Other Tales, illustrated by Jan Nesbitt. New York: McElderry Macmillan; London: Dent.

The Horrendous Hullabaloo, illustrated by Patricia MacCarthy. London: Hamish Hamilton; New York: Viking.

The Girl with the Green Ear: Stories about Magic in Nature, illustrated by Shirley Hughes. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. (Collection of nine stories on nature theme from other collections)

The Fiddle and the Gun, a Margaret Mahy collection, illustrated by Elizabeth Fuller and others. Auckland: Shortland. (SR)

The World in Fourteen Ninety-Two (with Jean Fritz, Katherine Paterson and others), illustrated by Stefano Vitale. New York: Henry Holt.

The Great New Zealand TV Turn-off: handbook for parents, teachers, librarians by Sarah Clarkson, introduction by Margaret Mahy. Wellington: New Zealand Library Association.

1993

The Good Fortunes Gang (Cousins Quartet: Book 1), illustrated by John Farman. London, Doubleday; New York: Delacorte (illustrated by Marian Young). (Junior novel)

A Fortunate Name (Cousins Quartet: Book 2), illustrated by John Farman. London: Doubleday; New York: Delacorte (illustrated by Marian Young). (Junior novel)

The Three-Legged Cat, illustrated by Jonathan Allen. London: Hamish Hamilton; New York: Viking.

A Busy Day for a Good Grandmother, illustrated by Margaret Chamberlain. London: Hamish Hamilton; New York: Margaret McElderry.

Tick Tock Tales: Stories to Read Around the Clock, illustrated by Wendy Smith. London: Dent; New York: Margaret McElderry; St Leonards (Aus): Allen & Unwin. (Collection of stories from earlier collections)

1994

A Fortune Branches Out (Cousins Quartet: Book 3), illustrated by John Farman. London: Doubleday; New York: Delacorte (illustrated by Marian Young). (Junior novel)

Tangled Fortunes (Cousins Quartet: Book 4), illustrated by John Farman. London: Doubleday; New York: Delacorte (illustrated by Marian Young). (Junior novel)

The Greatest Show off Earth, illustrated by Wendy Smith. London: Hamish Hamilton; New York: Viking. (Junior novel)

Shock Forest and Other Stories (White Wolves series). London: A & C Black.

The Rattlebang Picnic, illustrated by Steven Kellogg. New York: Dial; London: Hamish Hamilton (1995).

The Christmas Tree Tangle, illustrated by Anthony Kerins. St Leonards: Allen & Unwin; London: Hamish Hamilton; New York: Margaret McElderry.

The Dragon's Telephone, illustrated by Christine Ross. Wellington: Telecom. (Promotional book for Telecom NZ Ltd)

Mr Mossop's Table (collection, various illustrators). Auckland: Wendy Pye. (SR)

'Sensible Questions', 'The Remarkable Cake' and 'The Reluctant Hero', in *The Penguin Book of Nonsense Verse*, selected and illustrated by Quentin Blake. London: Penguin.

1995

The Other Side of Silence. London: Hamish Hamilton; New York: Viking, 1995. (Young adult novel)

Tingleberries, Tuckertubs and Telephones, illustrated by Robert Staermose. London: Hamish Hamilton; New York: Viking. (Junior novel)

The Big Black Bulging Bump, illustrated Robert Staermose. Sydney: Scholastic.

Busy Day for a Good Grandmother, illustrated by Margaret Chamberlain. London: Penguin; New York: Margaret McElderry.

Cobwebs, Elephants and Stars, illustrated by Val Biro. Auckland: Wendy Pye. (SR)

The Greatest Binnie in the World, illustrated by Michael Martchenko. Auckland: Wendy Pye.

My Mysterious World, photographs by David Alexander. New York: Richard C. Owen. (Non-fiction, text and pictures of the author's life)

1996

The Five Sisters, illustrated by Patricia MacCarthy. London: Hamish Hamilton; New York: Viking (1997). (Novella)

Boom, Baby, Boom, Boom!, illustrated by Patricia MacCarthy. London: Hamish Hamilton; New York: Viking (1998).

Beaten by a Balloon, illustrated by Jonathan Allen. London: Hamish Hamilton; New York: Viking.

Questions Kids Ask Margaret Mahy. Auckland: Scholastic. (Non-fiction, illustrated)

1997

Operation Terror, illustrated by Ron Tiner. London: Puffin. (Junior novel)

The Horribly Haunted School, illustrated by Robert Staermose. London: Hamish Hamilton; New York: Viking (1998).

1998

A Summery Saturday Morning, illustrated by Selina Young. London: Hamish Hamilton; New York: Viking.

Don't Read This! Don't Read That! and Other Tales of the Unnatural (with Susan Cooper, Uri Orlev and others), illustrated by The Tjong Khing. Asheville, N.C.: Front Street.

Off to the Shop, photographed by Mary Walker. Auckland: Shortland. (SR)

1999

The Haunting, reissue as Puffin Modern Classic, 'Afterword' by Stephanie Nettell, London: Penguin.

A Villain's Night Out. London: Puffin. (Junior novel)

Simply Delicious!, illustrated by Jonathan Allen. London: Frances Lincoln; New York: Orchard Books.

Down in the Dump with Dinsmore, illustrated by Steve Axelsen. London: Puffin; Ringwood, Vic.: Puffin.

The Dragon of an Ordinary Family, illustrated by Helen Oxenbury. London: Mammouth. (Revised edition)

What is the Solar System, illustrated by Jeff Fowler, reissue of *The Solar System*. Auckland: Wendy Pye. (SR)

'Rotten Red Riding Hood' (in *Cinderfella's Big Night and Other Fractured Fairy Tales*). Auckland: Shortland. (SR)

2000

24 Hours. London: HarperCollins; New York: Margaret McElderry. (Young adult novel)

Wonderful Me!, illustrated by Peter Bailey (reprint of *The First Margaret Mahy Story Book*). London: Dolphin.

Down the Dragon's Tongue, illustrated by Patricia MacCarthy. London: Frances Lincoln; New York: Orchard Books; Sydney: HarperCollins.

'OhdearOhdearOhdearOhdear.' Short story in *Storylines: the Anthology*, edited by Tessa Duder. Auckland: Scholastic and Storylines Children's Literature Foundation of New Zealand.

A Dissolving Ghost: Essays and More. Wellington: Victoria University Press. (Essays, interviews, short stories)

2001

Mischief and Mayhem, two Margaret Mahy fantasies, illustrated by Helen Bacon. Auckland: Shortland.

2002

Alchemy, London: HarperCollins; New York: Margaret McElderry. (Young adult novel)

The Riddle of the Frozen Phantom. London: HarperCollins. (Junior novel)

Dashing Dog, illustrated by Sarah Garland. Sydney: HarperCollins; New York: Greenwillow Books; London: Frances Lincoln. (Poetry)

2003

The Changeover (reissued in Collins Modern Classics). London: HarperCollins. (Young adult novel)

Wait For Me!, illustrated by Peter Bailey (reprint of *The Second Margaret Mahy Story Book*). London: Dolphin.

The Gargling Gorilla, illustrations by Tony Ross. Sydney: HarperCollins. (Collection of three stories)

'The Shadow Thief' in *Kids Night In!* edited by Jessica Adams, Juliet Partridge and Nick Earls. Melbourne: Penguin.

Me and My Dog, illustrated by Philip Webb. Wellington: Learning Media.

2004

Watch Me!, illustrated by Peter Bailey (reprint of *The Third Margaret Mahy Story Book*). London: Dolphin.

Shock Forest and Other Stories (White Wolves series). London: A & C Black.

2005

Maddigan's Fantasia. Auckland: HarperCollins. (Young adult novel linked to TV series *Maddigan's Quest*, produced by BBC and South Pacific Pictures)

Kaitangata Twitch. Melbourne: Allen & Unwin. (Young adult novel)

Zerelda's Horses, Kiwi Bites series. Auckland: Penguin. (Novella)

The Very Wicked Headmistress. London: Barn Owl Books.

2006 (forthcoming)

Portable Ghosts. Auckland: HarperCollins. (Junior novel)

Heriott (working title). London: Faber & Faber. (Trilogy)

Down the Back of the Chair, illustrated by Polly Dunbar. London: Frances Lincoln.

Not included are more than 100 stories from 1961 onwards for the *School Journal* published by the Department of Education, New Zealand; internationally marketed multi-media versions of many Mahy stories and novels, e.g. audio-cassettes, animated cartoon versions on video and adaptations for stage performance by the Court Theatre, Christchurch (*Mrs Discombobulus* 1985, *Norvin and the Shark* 2001, *The Great White Piratical Rumbustification* 2002, *A Dragon of an Ordinary Family* 2004), Canterbury Children's Theatre (*Robots, Redheads and Rascals* 1985), Tim Bray Productions (*A Lion in the Meadow, The Leaf Magic, The Witch in the Cherry Tree* 2004) and others.

Principal English-language publication in major countries of each book is given (not subsequent paperback editions or reprints except where revised).

Section 7

Select list of translated editions and their languages

Margaret Mahy's books have been regularly and extensively translated — many of them into more than a dozen languages — over a period of thirty years. The list given below is merely representative, and far from complete.

Alchemy

UK & Com.:	HarperCollins
US:	Margaret McElderry
Italy:	Mondadori
Japan:	Iwanami Shoten

Beaten by a Balloon (illustrated by Jonathan Allen)

UK & Com.:	Hamish Hamilton/Puffin
US:	Viking Penguin

The Big Black Bulging Bump (illustrated by Robert Staeremose)

Scholastic Australia/NZ

Boom, Baby, Boom, Boom (illustrated by Patricia MacCarthy)

UK & Com.:	Hamish Hamilton/Puffin
US:	Viking Penguin

Bubble Trouble And Other Poems and Stories

UK & Com.:	Hamish Hamilton
US:	Margaret McElderry (Macmillan)
Holland:	Queridos

A Busy Day for a Good Grandmother (illustrated by Margaret Chamberlain)

UK & Com.:	Hamish Hamilton/Puffin
US:	Margaret McElderry (Macmillan)
Finland:	Kustannus-Makela

The Catalogue of the Universe

US:	Atheneum
Germany:	Spectrum Verlag
Holland:	EM Queridos
Educational:	Heinemann
UK: (large print)	Chivers
Japan:	Iwanami Shoten
Denmark + audio:	Gyldendal
Spain:	Ediciones B
Sweden:	Norsdedts
Afrikaans:	Human & Rousseau
Finland:	Tammi
Estonia:	Eesti Raamat
UK (paperback):	HarperCollins

The Changeover: a supernatural romance

Italy:	Mondadori
Finland:	Tammi
US:	Atheneum
Sweden:	Awe/Gebers
Holland:	EM Queridos:
Japan:	Iwanami Shoten
Denmark:	Gyldendal
Germany:	Spectrum Verlag
Norway:	Book Clubs, Stabenfeldt
Large Print:	Chivers
Educational (Hardcover):	Macmillan
Spain:	Ediciones B
US:	McElderry
Thailand:	Butterfly Book House
UK:	Jim Henson Company Ltd
UK (Paperback):	Puffin

The Christmas Tree Tangle (illustrated by Anthony Kerins)

UK & Com.:	Hamish Hamilton/Puffin
US:	Margaret McElderry (Simon & Schuster)

The Cousins Quartet: The Good Fortunes Gang, A Fortunate Name, A Fortune Branches Out, Tangled Fortunes

UK & Com.:	Transworld
US:	Delacorte Press
Denmark:	Gyldendal
Germany:	Sauerlander
Holland:	Queridos
Italy:	Mondadori
Japan:	Iwanami Shoten

Dangerous Spaces

UK:	Hamish Hamilton/Puffin
US:	Viking Penguin
Large Print:	Chivers Press
Denmark:	Gyldendal
Holland:	Queridos
Finland:	Tammi
France:	Gallimard
Germany:	Ravensburger
Italy:	Mondadori
Japan:	Iwanami Shoten
Spain:	EDEBE
Sweden:	Eriksson & Lindgren

Dashing Dog! (illustrated by Sarah Garland)

UK:	Frances Lincoln
US:	Greenwillow (HarperCollins)

The Dentist's Promise (illustrated by Wendy Smith)

UK:	Scholastic
Aus/NZ:	Omnibus (Scholastic Australia)

Down the Dragon's Tongue (illustrated by Patricia MacCarthy)

UK:	Frances Lincoln
Aus/NZ:	HarperCollins
US:	Orchard Books

Down in the Dump with Dinsmore (illustrated by Stephen Axelsen)

Aus/NZ:	Penguin Australia
UK:	Puffin

A Dragon of an Ordinary Family (illustrated by Helen Oxenbury)

UK:	Heinemann, Reed International (Octopus)
US:	Dial Books, Penguin
Germany:	Neuer Finken

Fingers on the Back of the Neck (illustrated by The Tjong Khing)

IBBY — anthology published by Lemniscaat in Holland

The Five Sisters (illustrated by Patricia MacCarthy)

UK:	Hamish Hamilton/Puffin
US:	Viking Penguin
Greece:	S. Patakis
Italy:	Mondadori
Japan:	Iwanami Shoten

The Great Piratical Rumbustification (illustrated by Quentin Blake)

Norway:	NW Damm & Son A/S
Italy:	Ediciones Elle
UK (Paperback):	Puffin
Japan:	Iwanami Shoten
France:	Gallimard
Denmark:	Forum
Danish Audio Rights:	Gyldendal
Sweden:	Alfabet
Holland:	Zwijsen
Spain (Catalan):	Ediciones de la Magrana S/A
US:	Godine
Italy:	Mondadori

The Great White Man-Eating Shark (illustrated by Jonathan Allen)

Finland:	Kustannus-Makela Oy
US:	Dial Books for Young Readers
Holland:	Uitgeverij Facet nv
UK (Paperback):	Puffin
Sweden:	Sjostrands
Film:	Weston Wood Studios

The Greatest Show Off Earth (illustrated by Wendy Smith)

UK & Com.:	Hamish Hamilton/Puffin
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US:	Viking Penguin
Italy:	Mondadori

The Horrendous Hullabaloo (illustrated by Patricia MacCarthy)

UK:	Hamish Hamilton/Puffin
US:	Viking Penguin

The Horribly Haunted House (illustrated by Rob Staeremose)

UK & Com.:	Hamish Hamilton/Puffin
US:	Viking Penguin
Audio/Large Print:	Chivers Press
Denmark:	Gyldendal
Finland:	Tammi
Italy:	Mondadori
Sweden:	Alfabet

The Haunting

Italy:	Mondadori
Spain:	Altea
Japan:	Iwanami Shoten
US:	Atheneum
Holland:	Ploegsma
Danish Rights:	Forum
Educational:	Heinemann
Sweden:	AWE/Gebers
TV/Film:	Dave Gibson
Germany:	Spectrum Verlag
Catalan:	Ediciones de la Magrana
Audio/Large Print:	Chivers Press
Norway:	Book Clubs, Stabenfeldt
US (Hardback):	McElderry
US (Paperback):	Dell (via McElderry)
UK (Paperback):	Puffin
Thailand:	Butterfly Book House
China:	Eastern Publishing Company Ltd

Keeping House (illustrated by Wendy Smith)

UK:	Hamish Hamilton/Puffin
US:	Margaret McElderry

A Lion in the Meadow (illustrated by Jenny Williams)

Brazil:	Editora Moderna
Denmark:	Gyldendal
Germany:	Ravensburger
Japan:	Kaisea-Sha Publishing Company
Holland:	Thieme
US:	Overlook Press

The Man Whose Mother Was a Pirate (illustrated by Margaret Chamberlain)

Finland:	Kustannus-Makela Oy
Holland:	Thieme
Denmark:	Gyldendal
US:	Viking Kestrel
Sweden:	Alfabet
Italy:	Mondadori
Norway:	Bogklubben Rasmus

US:	Atheneum
UK (Paperback):	Puffin
Memory	
Holland:	EM Queridos
US:	McElderry
UK (Paperback):	HarperCollins
Germany:	Spectrum Verlag
Large Print:	Isis
Japan:	Iwanami Shoten
Denmark:	Gyldendal
UK Educational:	Macmillan
Sweden:	AWE Gebers/Norstedt
Spain:	Ediciones B (Catalan & Castilian)
Film:	RHI
Italy:	Mondadori
Spain:	Ediciones SM

Operation Terror (illustrated by Ron Tiner)

UK & Com.:	Puffin (original paperback)
Italy:	Mondadori

The Other Side of Silence

UK & Com.:	Hamish Hamilton/Puffin
US:	Viking Penguin
Denmark:	Gyldendal
Holland:	Queridos
Finland:	Tammi
Germany:	Jungbrunnen (p/b: d.t.v.)
Italy:	Mondadori
Japan:	Iwanami Shoten
Spain:	Grijalbo Mondadori

The Pumpkin Man and the Crafty Creeper (illustrated by Helen Craig)

UK & Com.:	Jonathan Cape/Puffin
US:	Lothrop Lee & Shepard (Morrow)
Japan:	Sailor Shuppan

The Queen's Goat (illustrated by Emma Chichester-Clark)

UK & Com.:	Hamish Hamilton/Puffin
US:	Dial Penguin
Finland:	Kustannus-Makela

Simply Delicious! (illustrated by Jonathan Allen)

UK:	Frances Lincoln
Aus/NZ:	Penguin Australia
US:	Orchard Books

A Summery Saturday Morning (illustrated by Selina Young)

UK & Com.:	Penguin/Puffin
US:	Viking Penguin
Aus/NZ:	Puffin

The Three-legged Cat (illustrated by Jonathan Allen)

UK & Com.:	Hamish Hamilton/Puffin
US:	Viking Penguin
Belgium:	de Vries-Brouwers

The Tricksters

US:	Atheneum
Denmark & Audio:	Gyldendal
Sweden:	AWE Gebers
Holland:	EM Queridos
France:	Gallimard
Japan:	Iwanami Shoten
Large Print:	ISIS
Educational Hardcover:	Longman
Italy:	Mondadori
UK (Paperback):	HarperCollins

Tingleberries, Tuckertubs and Telephones (illustrated by Rob Staermose)

UK & Com.:	Hamish Hamilton/Puffin
US:	Viking Penguin
Catalan:	Magrana
Mexico (Spanish):	Fondo de Cultura Economica
Denmark:	Gyldendal
Germany:	Arena
Italy:	Mondadori
Sweden:	Alfabeta

24 Hours

UK & Com.:	Collins
US:	Margaret McElderry (Simon & Schuster)
Denmark:	Gyldendal
Finland:	Tammi
Germany:	d.t.v.
Germany:	Deutscher Taschenbuch Verlag GmbH
Italy:	Mondadori

Underrunners

UK & Com.:	Hamish Hamilton/Puffin
US:	Viking Penguin
Large Print:	Chivers Press
Denmark:	Gyldendal
Holland:	Querido's
Finland:	Tammi
France:	Gallimard
Germany:	Sauerlander
Italy:	Mondadori
Japan:	Iwanami Shoten
Sweden:	Eriksson & Lindgren

A Villain's Night Out (illustrated by Harry Horse)

UK & Com.:	Puffin (original paperback)
Audio/Large Print:	Chivers
Italy:	Mondadori
Japan:	Iwanami Shoten

The World in 1492 (Mahy one of five contributors)

US:	Henry Holt
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Section 8

Five of the most important titles by the candidate

With such a massive body of work from which to choose, covering thirty years of major novels for both children and young adults, short story collections, plays, poetry and over a hundred picture books, our choice of five of Margaret Mahy's 'most important' books was a difficult one.

We narrowed our final selection down to her most recent young adult novel, published in 2005, three earlier novels (two Carnegie Medal winners and one an *Observer* Teen Fiction winner, all still in print), and one particularly notable and enduring picture book, in print for 36 years:

A Lion in the Meadow

The Haunting

The Changeover: a supernatural romance

Memory

Maddigan's Fantasia

All are included in the selection of books provided for the jury.



A Lion in the Meadow

by Margaret Mahy,
illustrated by Jenny Williams,
published by Franklin Watts, New York, 1969

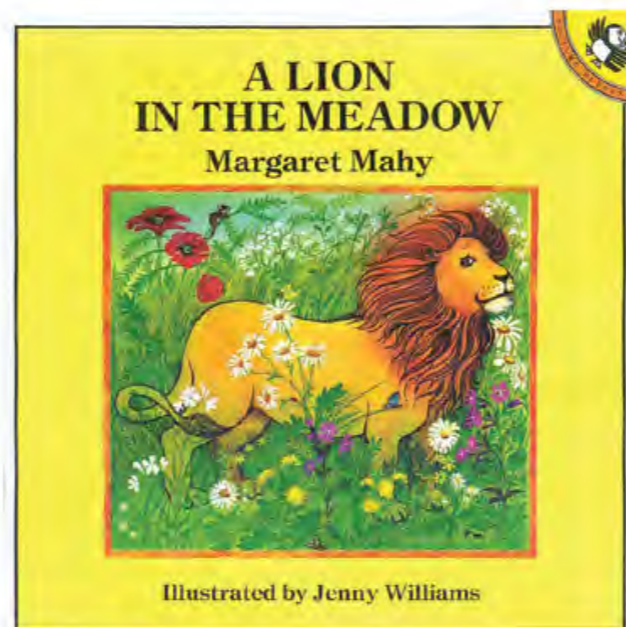
Universally recognised as the picture book that launched Mahy's writing career, this story has a theme that intrigues both children and adults alike. It tells of a little boy who informs his mother there is a lion in the meadow.

She thinks he is making up stories, so she makes one up too — a dragon to chase the lion away. But the dragon chases the frightened lion inside, and eventually the lion becomes a house lion and lives in the broom cupboard.

Interestingly, this story is one of Mahy's own favourites, and she often refers to the actual writing of it in her talks — in a tone of slightly bewildered affection. 'Well, I had my beginning. I had no idea where these words might lead me. I wrote the next word — the next line and then the next, improvising in what turned out to be a particularly useful way. The final story is still one of the most economical texts I have ever produced, and I am still particularly pleased with it for that reason ...' (Mahy, 'Endings & Beginnings', conference paper in *A Dissolving Ghost*).

After winning the Esther Glen Medal in 1970, the book went into several reprints in Britain and the United States. It has been published in several foreign language editions, and is still in print thirty-six years later.

Critics have tried to identify the story's particular appeal. 'It is pleasant to see a miniature reprint of that fine fable of imagination *A Lion in the Meadow*. I still think in some ways it is Margaret Mahy's best story so far — crisp, lucid and superbly reflecting the humor in a parent-child relationship.' (Margery Fisher, *Growing Point*, May 1972) In the *New Statesman*, June 1972, Ann Maxwell writes, '[*A Lion in the Meadow*] is out of the ordinary. It has fewer than 400 words, but is to be lingered over again and again ...'



The theme of the story exemplifies Mahy's fascination with reality, illusion and imagination. In an interview with Murray Edmond (*A Dissolving Ghost*) she says that the book is about 'someone whose imaginative extremity actually produces an alteration in reality.' Adult readers of the book have sometimes found this theme quite an intellectual and emotional challenge, as evinced by the controversy over the original ending. Sixteen years after the initial publication a new edition was produced with 'a kinder, more positive ending', to use Mahy's own words. Many years later Mahy now has the courage to confess that she does not believe her own alteration, and the 'true' ending is the original, more ruthless one (*A Dissolving Ghost*).

This is obviously a story that connects with some deep instinct inside us, namely a longing for the lion to be real. And as long as children keep finding within the story a satisfying representation of that longing, the book will continue to delight future generations.

The Haunting

by Margaret Mahy,
published by Dent, London, 1982;
Puffin Modern Classics, 1999

The Haunting was Margaret Mahy's first major novel for young people, written at a critical turning point in her career. In 1980, with a degree of financial security and some thirty-five picture books, five novellas and many stories for New Zealand's acclaimed *School Journal* behind her, she had resigned her library position to write full-time and in particular, to write longer fiction.

The result was a series of brilliant, highly original novels that appeared at regular intervals through the 1980s and on into the next decade — an outpouring that even today at the age of 69 shows no sign of diminishing.

The Haunting quickly won its author international plaudits as a novelist of rare talents.

Typical of its reviews was the *Junior Bookshelf*: 'The theme, and the mechanics of its magic, are handled with the mastery of a virtuoso performer.' 'A dazzling piece of writing', wrote leading Australian commentator Agnes Nieuwenhuizen in *Good Books for Teenagers* (Mandarin, 1992). 'What Margaret Mahy has achieved where many have failed is to write a psychological thriller alongside a tale of ghosts and magic' — Sarah Hayes in *The Times Literary Supplement*, 1982.

Two major awards soon followed: Mahy became the first New Zealander, and one of few writers outside Britain, to win the coveted British Library Association's Carnegie Medal, followed by New Zealand's most prestigious award for a children's book, the Esther Glen Medal.

The Haunting has been published in American hardback and paperback editions, and translated into eleven languages, including Thai, Chinese and Japanese. Her own adaptation, *The Haunting of Barnaby Palmer*, was filmed by the Gibson Group, Wellington.



The book has also been praised as an important book for the world-wide 1980s feminist movement. Bill Buchanan, in *Twentieth Century Young Adult Writers* (St James Press, Detroit, 1994), states that 'because it invests its female characters with so much power, the story has been applauded by many critics as being a feminist breakthrough in young adult fiction.'

His and other academic essays on Mahy's work have suggested 'the satisfaction of analysing a Mahy novel, of peeling away each layer, still to find it is not the last.' (Linda Ford in *Researching Children's Literature — A Coming of Age*, LSU College of Higher Education, UK, 1994)

The Changeover: A Supernatural Romance

by Margaret Mahy,
published by Dent, London, 1984;
Collins Modern Classics, 2003

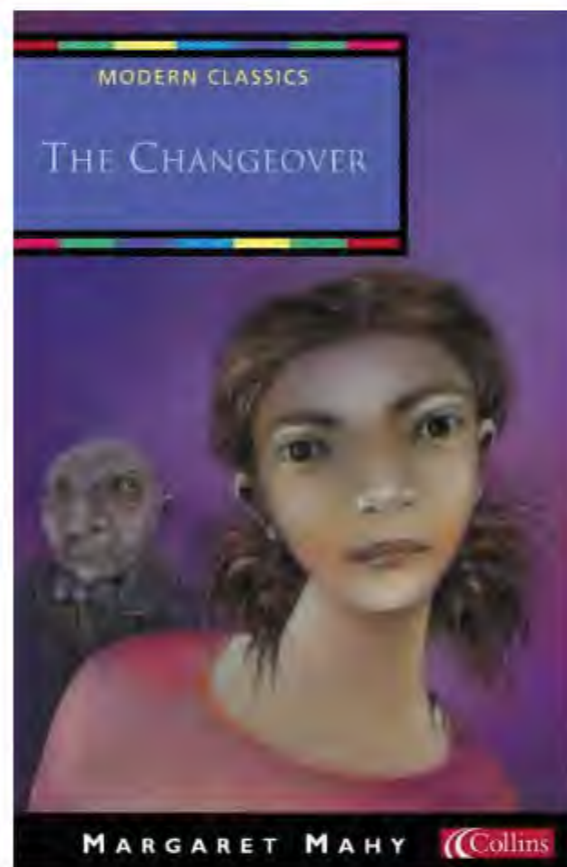
Having achieved great international success with her first children's novel, *The Haunting*, Margaret Mahy went on to the unprecedented achievement of a second Carnegie Medal in 1984 with her first novel for young adults, *The Changeover: a supernatural romance*.

This novel also won the Esther Glen Medal and received plaudits and awards from IBBY (an Honour Book), the American Library Association, the *School Library Journal*, *Booklist* and the *Horn Book*. It went into numerous reprints in Britain and the United States (including paperback), was published in ten foreign languages; and is still in print today as a Collins Modern Classic.

Mahy subtitled the book a supernatural romance, and it is indeed a heady cocktail of magic and desire, spiced with vivid imagery and a large dollop of humour. It tells how 14-year-old Laura undergoes a transformation in order to activate her latent magical powers to save her younger brother from an ancient and evil demon. Laura is assisted in this changeover process by 17-year-old Sorenson (Sorry) Carlisle, his mother and his grandmother, all white witches. Academic comment has consistently seen *The Changeover* as a particularly subtle and successful contemporary re-working of the fairytale story of the Sleeping Beauty.

As with all of Mahy's novels, there are tightly interwoven subplots, themes and tensions. In the *English Journal* (April 1987) Ben Nelms writes, 'It goes well beyond a simple story of witchcraft to achieve a moral and psychological subtlety similar to that in the stories of the great British fantasists C.S. Lewis and J.R.R. Tolkien.'

Setting is an important element in all of Mahy's novels. Again she has used themes of conflict to



illustrate the internal battles of the characters. The apparently harmless suburban environment has 'something subterranean' lurking under its streets, and at the heart of the subdivision sits Janua Caeli, the ancient and mysterious estate of the Carlisle witches. This is the first of Mahy's books to have a New Zealand setting, a significant step for the author. In the *School Library Journal* (September 1984), Michael Cart writes, 'the New Zealand setting is detailed but unobtrusive and neatly integrated into the plot'.

The author's musical and elegant language and use of metaphor is 'beautiful without being ornate'. Mahy's imagery is very intense, able to summon up several levels of understanding in the reader. In *Books for Keeps* (January 1996) Nicholas Tucker points out that the images involved in Laura's transformation symbolise 'the changes within puberty all girls must face'.

Every reader remembers something different from a novel as complex as *The Changeover*. But in the end it is probably the difficult, dangerous, passionate, hesitant and often humorous attraction between Laura and Sorry that most young readers will remember — and long to experience themselves.

Memory

by Margaret Mahy,
published by Dent, London, 1987;
reprinted by Collins Flamingo, 2002

In 1988, *Memory* won Britain's *Observer* Teen Fiction Award. Published just a year after the complex fantasy *The Tricksters*, this novel moves on from the loving depiction of New Zealand landscape mentioned above, to portray the author's own city of Christchurch as a place where unemployment, drunkenness and violence make the streets unsafe for women.

As the title suggests, its preoccupation is with the nature of memory. *The Oxford History of New Zealand Literature* points out that it is one of the very few books by Mahy with no fantasy element. In this respect it foreshadows *24 Hours* (2000), and Mahy herself has commented on the fact that the protagonists in both books are trying to come to terms with an untimely death.

In both *Memory* and *24 Hours*, a young hero finds himself entering a time zone in which a particular drama is acted out. In the case of rebellious, unemployed 19-year-old Jonny Dart in *Memory*, he is suffering from selective amnesia and unsure whether he is responsible for the death of his sister five years before. His chance encounter with Sophie, an elderly woman suffering from Alzheimer's disease, provides him with the opportunity to look outside himself, to look after someone else and thus find redemption from his guilt and fear.

Critics have praised *Memory* for its compassionate portrayal of dementia, based on Mahy's own experiences with an elderly aunt. Others have also noted the story's feminist strategies, with Bonny seen as the witch/enchantress and Sophie as the crone who aids the knight/hero on his quest, along with elements of 'Little Red Riding Hood', a fairy tale described as central to feminist thinking about myth, legend and stereotype.



Whether the reader understands all the allusions and references to old stories or reads on a more simplistic level, this remains a rich and powerful novel, which has found an adult audience as well as its intended younger one.

Maddigan's Fantasia

by Margaret Mahy, published by HarperCollins, Auckland, 2005

Incredibly, after 45 years as a published writer, Margaret Mahy's latest novel for young people achieves a number of career 'firsts'.

At 496 pages, it is much her longest book, her first science fiction epic novel with a truly fantasy setting (as opposed to the domestic family settings of all her major fantasy novels) and the first written in tandem with a forthcoming international television series.

In 2003 Mahy was contracted to write both the detailed storyline for a major 13-part television series produced by Britain's BBC and New Zealand's South Pacific Pictures, and an associated novel for HarperCollins Australia and New Zealand.

The book was published in May 2005, with the television series due for screening in 2006. As a major international production, it will be seen by a world-wide audience, and the novel is expected to reach a huge audience in English and translations. A second series, and probably a second book, is under negotiation.

Maddigan's Fantasia is set in post-apocalyptic New Zealand, a bleak landscape of isolated coastal communities and de-personalised cities. The Fantasia, one of the few remaining links between these settlements after The Destruction and The Chaos, is a colourful and bizarre travelling circus, an archetypal Mahy collection of acrobats, magicians, jugglers, musicians, trapeze artists and jugglers — 'leftover people going between the leftover places', bringing laughter and healing to the injured land. In a challenging odyssey towards the city of Solis, through mountains, lakes, caves and swamps, the Fantasia is in constant danger from strangers, as well as treachery from within, dealing with major issues like time travel, alternate universes, power and corruption, magic and illusion.

Critics have already praised the book as containing some of Mahy's best, most inventive and compelling



work. Her characteristic subtle drawing on myth and legend, including New Zealand Maori traditions, is in evidence, as are her rich language, wide emotional range and ability to sustain tension to a dramatic final interaction between the forces of good and evil, the past and the future. Comments typically include 'a long, delicious read'; 'a remarkable, delightful, surprising book'; 'a saga that is powerfully affecting and able to be consumed with pleasure by the young and adults alike'; and 'a compelling fantasy epic'.



Section 9

List of books submitted to the Jury

Novels for young adults

- The Haunting* (1982), Carnegie Medal, UK, 1982
The Changeover: a supernatural romance (1984), Carnegie Medal, UK, 1984
The Catalogue of the Universe (1985), Phoenix Award, USA, 2005
Memory (1987), Observer Teen Fiction Award, UK, 1988
Maddigan's Fantasia (2005)

Picture books

- A Lion in the Meadow* (1969), Esther Glen Medal, NZ, 1970
The Man Whose Mother Was a Pirate (1972)
The Great White Man-Eating Shark (1989)

Educational school 'reader'

- The Girl Who Washed in Moonlight* (1987)

Section 10

Reviews of the books submitted to the Jury

The Haunting (1982)

Michael Cart, Beverly Hills Public Library, California,
School Library Journal, August 1982, p. 119

Here is an absolutely first-rate contemporary novel of the supernatural. The compelling story involves the ‘haunting’ of eight-year-old Barney Palmer and the discovery of both a long lost great-uncle with psychic powers and a family curse — or is it? The principal characters — Barney and the members of his family — are beautifully drawn, and perhaps because they care so much for each other, readers care for them, too. Their growth and development as individuals and as members of a family unit are as important to the story as its supernatural chills, thrills and puzzlements, a fact that lends this genre book unusual richness. The story itself is believably written, although its several surprises are a bit too predictable and the denouement comes a bit too early.

The Junior Bookshelf, vol. 47, no. 1, February 1983, p. 45

We know Miss Mahy best as a distinguished writer of texts for picture-books. It has always been clear that this is one of the most taxing of all literary exercises. It comes nevertheless as a surprise to discover what a commanding writer of the full-length novel she is. *The Haunting* is masterly in its conception and above all in the way it uses words to overcome scepticism and to give a vivid actuality to a fantastic theme.

The reader is looking in on a fairly normal happy family. Claire, the new stepmother, has had no difficulty in winning the affections of her ready-made family. Perhaps Troy, the eldest, is an unusually silent girl, but then her sister Tabitha makes up for this by talking all the time. Barney is a serious boy, although he seems to have discarded the invisible companions of his infancy, Mantis, Bigbuzz and Ghost. Then

Barney’s world twists, and he finds himself haunted by an apparently solid ghost, a small boy in old-fashioned clothes. This is the beginning of a strange period in which events seem to threaten not only Barney but Claire’s unborn child. Can the ghost be that of Great-Uncle Cole, whose name is not to be mentioned by the family? But then, it is discovered, Great-Uncle Cole is not dead. Can one be haunted by a living ghost? Ultimately it is the silent Troy who has the answers to all Barney’s questions.

The theme, and the mechanics of its magic, are handled with the mastery of a virtuoso performer. But the strength of the book lies in the way Miss Mahy relates the fantasy to the relationships of ordinary life. The Scholars and the Palmers may be unusual but they are real people, and it matters greatly to the reader that the harmony of their lives should not be destroyed. Even Great-Granny Scholar, ‘a terrible old lady, a small, thin witch, frail but furious’, is not only convincing but sympathetic. These positive factors would in themselves make this a most memorable book. What lifts it into an altogether higher class is the way Miss Mahy tells her story, using words as if they came fresh from the mint. Here is Tabitha, on the subject of Great-Granny Scholar: “I don’t mind her being wrinkled. It’s just that all her wrinkles are so angry. She’s like a wall with furious swear words scribbled all over it.”

After all the terror and the soul-searching, it is left to Claire to have the last word on behalf of Barney and ‘us ordinary people’. A marvellous book.



The Changeover: a supernatural romance (1984)

Kirkus Review, vol. 52, September 1984

Again, as in *The Haunting*, New Zealand writer Mahy proves that all-out supernatural stories can still be written with intelligence, humor, and a fearful intensity that never descends into pretentious murk or lurid sensationalism. Laura, 14, living with divorced mum (a bookstore manager) and little brother Jacko in a small New Zealand town, is a ‘sensitive’. She gets ‘warnings’ when big disturbances — like her parents’ divorce — are imminent. She has the ability to take one look at older schoolmate Sorenson Carlisle and *know* that he’s a witch. And when an old junk-store owner named Carmody Braque playfully stamps Jacko’s hand with a smiling replica of Braque’s own face, it’s Laura who soon realizes that something ghastly has happened: ‘the stamp was part of him now, more than a tattoo — a sort of parasite picture tunneling its way deeper and deeper, feeding itself as it went.’

Jacko falls ill, then becomes seriously, mysteriously sick, wasting away, comatose, in a hospital bed. Laura’s distraught mother, now growing closer to a librarian-suitor, can’t even listen to her daughter’s ideas about the supernatural causes of Jacko’s decline. So Laura desperately turns for help to ‘Sorry’ Carlisle, who lives in a forbidding ancestral manse with his mother and grandmother — good witches who tried (in vain) to give Sorry a normal life away from magic. At first the Carlises are cautious, distant, slow to admit their witchy powers; Sorry, deeply ambivalent about witch-hood, is sarcastic, sexually teasing. But eventually they agree to guide Laura in her battle for Jacko’s life against Carmody Braque, a demon who must feed on human souls and bodies.

The first step? Laura must make ‘the changeover’ into witch-hood — something her psychic sensibility makes possible. (The visionary ritual involved is a perfect mix of the chilling and comic, with Laura taking pot-shots at the poor literary quality of

Sorry’s chants.) Then, with moral support from Sorry, Laura must have a one-on-one confrontation with demon Braque, hiding her new witch-hood behind dark glasses and stamping *his* hand with a sign of *her* power. And finally, after Braque’s Oz-style annihilation (‘he continued to change back through the centuries of stolen life until his clothes collapsed around what at first appeared to be a rotting, heaving mass’), Laura can celebrate Jacko’s recovery — and her own recovery from a ‘secret illness no one had ever completely recognised or been able to cure’: the post-divorce hatred of her father, the jealousy of her mother’s new boyfriend.

Mahy thus invests the occult evils here with a metaphorical, psychological undertow; at the same time, however, while filling out all the characters (including the witches) with textured charm, she never stints on thoroughgoing creeps and scares. In sum: the best supernatural YA fiction around, with Stephen King’s power and Mahy’s own class and polish.

Sarah Hayes, *The Times Literary Supplement*, 13 July 1984

Adding a subtitle to a novel often unsettles the reader and prompts questions about the author’s intentions. Is there some uncertainty in the author’s mind? Is he explaining or even apologizing for some unexpected element in the novel? Margaret Mahy is a thoughtful writer, and her subtitle, though quite unnecessary, reveals a great deal about her intentions.

The word ‘supernatural’ assumes a normal or natural state of things into which the supernatural intrudes. Nothing could be superficially more normal than the setting for *The Changeover*. Laura is a fourteen-year-old schoolgirl living on a rough modern estate (the Gardendale subdivision of an unnamed New Zealand city) with Kate, her chaotic divorced mother, and Jacko, her three-year-old brother. Laura’s relationship with Kate is prickly, but intimate and highly articulate. When Jacko falls desperately ill, both Kate and Laura become involved

with boyfriends; at a time when they might have cut themselves off from life outside the family, the world seems about to rush in on them.

Above and beyond this true-to-life scenario is Laura's sense of a supernatural dimension. She has had warnings in the past, and has learnt to recognize the signs. She knows, for example, that the goodlooking blond prefect at school, Sorenson (Sorry) Carlisle, is really a witch. She knows too that when Jacko's hand is stamped by the new owner of the novelty shop, Carmody Braque, the mark has gone far deeper than the surface of his skin. It seems that Carmody Braque is a lemur, a dead spirit who feeds on the vitality of others without inhabiting their bodies. Laura realizes that the only way to save Jacko is for her to undergo a 'changeover' and call forth her own latent powers of witchcraft.

Twelve pages of phantasmagoria cover the changeover, which is enacted in the Carlisle bathroom. Laura travels from a strangely altered school yard through fairytale forests on to a universal dream landscape, with the enigmatic TAM HTAB drifting in an out of her consciousness until the process is complete and BATH MAT reappears. Margaret Mahy can lapse into whimsy, but this voyage through the mind is sustained remarkably well, punctuated as it is by the third element in her novel, the romantic.

Throughout her trance, Laura is aware of Sorenson Carlisle's physical presence. Sorry, several years older than Laura, is distracted by the body Laura herself has not yet learnt to feel comfortable with. The knowledge of a sexual aspect to the bond between them confuses both boy and girl. That adolescent mixture of confusion and elation, design and guilt, is handled with tact and delicacy, yet it remains a very powerful force in the novel.

After the changeover Laura marks Carmody Braque with her own stamp, a happy smiling face, and Jacko is hauled back from death. Braque's dying paean to the beauty of youthful flesh complements the tentative physicality of the teenagers. The double aspect of things — man and beast, good and evil,

young and old — intrigues Margaret Mahy. In the manner of all good supernaturalists, her stories always have a perfectly possible rational explanation. This one could be about the products of a young girl's fevered imagination during a period of physical and emotional turmoil; or about the influence of a boy traumatized by a cruel foster father and years of psychotherapy; or about a miracle cure, a single parent, and a dirty old man. These explanations are never offered, merely there for the reader to think about if he chooses.

It is rare to find a novel which captures so well the changeover from child to adult, and from what is real in the mind to what is real outside. Readers who have grown up with Margaret Mahy will recognize here that land of infinite possibilities, discovered out there so many years ago by the lion that might or might not have been in the meadow.



The Catalogue of the Universe (1985)

Ann A. Flowers, *Horn Book Magazine* 62, May–June 1986

Taking a new direction from her novels with a supernatural theme, Margaret Mahy has written a realistic love story of two young people — each searching for a personal identity, each suffering from a special difficulty.

Angela May is eighteen, a young woman of great beauty, who lives with her odd, reclusive mother, Dido, in a ramshackle house. They have always lived on the edge of poverty, but Dido has managed against great odds to carve out a more or less happy life for them. She has steadfastly refused to tell Angela who her father is, all the while spinning romantic stories about him and their love affair.

Angela is determined to find her father and confides in her best friend, Tycho Potter. Tycho has a most unusual personality — he believes understanding gives power and cherishes an Ionian view of the

universe, always questioning and observing. But his whole life has been affected because he is, or believes himself to be, a very ugly young man. He is also madly, but unrequitedly, in love with Angela.

Tycho can foresee the possible complications when Angela finds and confronts her father and advises against that action. But Angela will not heed him, and the interview is as distressing as Tycho has feared — the father, a cold nasty piece of work, accuses Angela of attempting blackmail. After lashing out wildly and emotionally against her mother's deception, she turns to Tycho for comfort, and at last they become lovers. Tycho's self-esteem is further enhanced by his unexpected heroism in rescuing a man from a burning car, and Angela is reconciled with her mother.

Tycho is the more interesting character of the two, uncertain yet highly intelligent, objective yet introspective. He has an utterly mad, Bagthorpien family whose wickedly funny conversations are the best part of the book.

Very tightly woven — the action takes place over two days — richly textured, and abounding in fascinating and eccentric characters, the book is another *tour de force* for the notable author.

'Test of fire', Audrey Laski, *The Times Educational Supplement*, 15 November 1985

A brief plot summary could make this sound like another of those adolescent novels that pile cliché on cliché: the beautiful heroine trying to find her natural father, the friendship which unexpectedly blossoms into love, the sudden shattering accident. All those elements are there. But what Margaret Mahy makes of them, as her admirers will rightly expect, is something entirely new and golden.

What she has done here is to write a realistic fairy tale, in which the happy ending imposes a sense of complete rightness because the readers so much desire it. Tycho, short, plain, bookish and steady, is the Frog Prince; Angela a princess sentimentally obsessed with the need to reach the father she

believes had only failed to marry her mother because of his family responsibilities. They need to cure each other of false ideas; his sense of worthlessness, hers of undue, unrealistic worth. And, like Tamino and Pamina, they need to pass through a test of fire.

The preceding paragraph in a sense gives as false an impression as the first might have done, by making this sound a solemn novel. Of course, like everything Margaret Mahy writes, it is very funny, and it picks up unerringly the sound of clever young people talking — especially Tycho's layabout brother Richard. But though not solemn, it is serious, written with an awareness of the possibilities of language which can only be called poetic, and drawing convincing family relationships.

My one regret about it is that, because its leading characters are very bright sixth formers, there may be rather a tight limitation on its readership. The substantial paragraphs in which Tycho meditates on the philosophy of astronomy could be off-putting to young people who would delight in moments like the one when Angela puts *The Catalogue of the Universe*, the book within the book, to an entirely different purpose from that for which it was intended — the moment when the Frog Prince gets the spell-breaking kiss. Such pleasures should be widely shared.



Memory (1987)

Journal of Reading, vol. 33, no. 2, November 1989

The New Zealand author Margaret Mahy has, in *Memory*, produced a novel so sad and so funny, so real and so bizarre, so insightful about both the very old and the very young that it is unforgettable. Jonny, in trouble at home and with the police, wanders the city at night looking for, and at the same time trying to avoid, his guilt for the death of his sister. Sophie, old and alone and ill with Alzheimer's disease, also wanders the city, living in the past, lost in the present.

When Jonny accompanies Sophie home to her house he enters the weird and often funny world that her confused mind has created. Sometimes angry, sometimes suspicious, but most often strong and self-reliant, the Sophie that Mahy has drawn is never pathetic. As Jonny finds himself caring for and about Sophie he changes subtly, just enough to be human, as he faces and begins to master his guilt. Few novels have even one memorable, fully alive character: this book blesses us with two who will likely remain a permanent part of the lives of its readers.

The Horn Book Magazine, May/June 1998, pp. 360–61

In another of her perceptive, brilliant books about young people, Margaret Mahy builds a novel around patterns and memory.

Jonny Dart, the protagonist, is a troubled young man, at nineteen clearly beginning to be a rebel against society — drinking, fighting, not working. His life has been undermined by several things; until the age of fourteen he and his older sister, Janine, were a commercial success as a singing and dancing team doing television advertising. But Janine was killed in a fall from some cliffs, an accident in which he is afraid he played a part. Festering in his mind has also been the idea that most people, including his parents, thought the wrong child had been killed.

So, drunk after an altercation with the police, he sets out to find the only other witness to the accident, Janine's friend Bonny Benedicta. He stumbles, instead, on Sophie, an old lady who has lost her memory, and Jonny decides to go where the wheel of fortune takes him. He helps her home, finding her house filthy and uncared for and her life in total disarray. He sees evidence that someone is preying on her, extracting money and stealing small items, and eventually he discovers the culprit to be his own schoolboy nemesis, Nev.

Fragments of Sophie's past, doled out piecemeal in her conversations, slowly assemble for Jonny into some part of her bittersweet life story, and she

mistakes him for her long-lost young love. Jonny tries to leave Sophie to her fate, but troubled by an unusual feeling of responsibility, he keeps returning, somewhat unwillingly, to deal with her problems.

By the end of the story, his life has come full circle, clearing and redefining his memories of the past and releasing him from his drifting ways. Jonny's actions point up the echoes in his story; he nearly jumps from the cliff to try to save Janine, and he does jump from Sophie's balcony to save her from Nev. Casual remarks show up the past like flashes of lightning, and even minor characters reappear in unexpected and enlightening ways.

The characterization, rich as plum pudding, shows the truly pathetic yet amiable and loveable Sophie, Jonny desperately seeking his true past, and enigmatic, reserved Bonny. A magnificent novel, delving into searching and understanding, reality and memory.



***Maddigan's Fantasia* (2005)**

'A fantasy for several levels', Trevor Agnew, *The Press*, Christchurch, New Zealand, 11 June 2005

'When terrible things turn out well, we call them adventures,' says Garland Maddigan, who is the unassuming hero at the heart of this exciting adventure. A tiny travelling circus, Maddigan's Fantasia comes to hold the destiny of the world, as it faces attacks by bandits, monsters and time-travellers, as well as treachery from within. Maddigan's Fantasia is one of the last remaining links between the settlements that have survived The Destruction and The Chaos, caused when the world 'growled like a mad dog and tore itself to pieces'.

Garland, the tightrope walker, who is also the great-granddaughter of the Fantasia's founder and daughter of the ringmaster, begins to keep a journal when she finds a blank book which has survived the wars. She describes the circus troupe, which forms her wider family, as they set off on their challenging

journey to the city of Solis: bossy Lilith, motherly Goneril, and overconfident Tane.

As the circus passes ruined cities and motorways buried in the bush, tragedy strikes. Garland has to cope with her father's death and disturbing changes within the Fantasia.

Eden and Timon, two mysterious young refugees, who turn up carrying a baby named Jewel, claim to have arrived from the future in order to set the past right. They have strange powers but their motives are not always clear, and they are pursued through time by murderous enemies, as the past and the future interact. Eden's magical powers and Timon's divided personality create uncertainty.

This novel was written in tandem with a television series, which will screen on TV3, probably later this year. Therefore, in writing her original story outlines, Mahy says she introduced visual elements such as 'landscape possibilities, mysterious tunnels and things like that. I was thinking of crossing, say, Canterbury and going over the mountain passes to something approximating the West Coast.' Some readers may recognize an early destination named Gramth.

As their odyssey takes the Fantasia through mountains, lakes, caves and swamps, there are many surprises, often echoing myths and legends. The circus folk have to face the Taniwha, as well as the Road Rats and Birdboys. Garland also finds an amazing library, which in true Mahy fashion, holds its own secrets. This is no simple quest story; its characters have to deal with such major issues as time travel, alternate universes, power and corruption, magic, and illusion. Yet Mahy always maintains a sense of wonder. Very little is as it seems.

Mahy also has the magical ability to create sympathy for the most unlikely characters. Even the assassins, the machine-like Ozul and the mechanical Maska, engage our pity when their monstrous master, the Nennog, threatens to 'delete' them. 'My lord, we have worked for you — been true to you,' they cry. This richness of character and emotional range gives total plausibility to the fantasy worlds of Maddigan's Fantasia.

Garland is alarmed to find that, even as she writes, her words are somehow being read and affecting events around them. Despite this, Garland realizes that the world's only chance of remaking civilization rests with her, so she keeps on writing, using the power of narrative to the full. 'Writing it down would give her some power over things that were really beyond her ... she had to remember them as well as she possible could, and somehow build a story out of them, for if she built a story she would be able to learn it by heart and take charge of it and the story would, in time, dissolve into her blood and build itself into her bones.'

The conclusion involves a dramatic and exciting interaction between the past and the future, with unexpected consequences for several characters.

Maddigan's Fantasia is a remarkable, delightful, surprising book, containing some of Mahy's best work. Garland's saga is powerfully affecting and able to be read and enjoyed at several levels. It will be consumed with pleasure by teenagers and adults alike. As Garland says, 'A book isn't truly finished until someone reads it.'



***A Lion in the Meadow* (1969)**

Marjery Fisher, *Growing Point*, vol. 11, no. 1, May 1972

It is pleasant to see a miniature reprint of that fine fable of imagination, *A Lion in the Meadow*. I still think in some ways it is Margaret Mahy's best story so far — crisp, lucid and superbly reflecting the humour in a parent-child relationship.

Ann Maxwell, *New Statesman*, 1972

[*A Lion in the Meadow*] is out of the ordinary. It has fewer than 400 words, but is to be lingered over again and again, not rushed through while the potatoes are cooking and returned to the library.



The Man Whose Mother Was a Pirate (1972)

Edward Hudson, *Children's Book Review*, 1972

Margaret Mahy's stories are always highly original and her new one features two loveable characters in the shape of a portly business man and his ex-pirate, pipe-smoking mother who longs to return to the sea ... Mrs Mahy must indeed have a great love of the sea herself for her descriptive prose is, at times, almost poetical. She has a wonderful way with words and an ability to convey sensations, sights and sounds, whatever her subject, which is aesthetically satisfying ... [This picture book] is recommended without hesitation.

Diane Walkstein, *The New York Times Book Review*, 1973

Margaret Mahy makes her words bump and harrumph along in perfect gait with her eccentric landlocked characters until suddenly she bursts free, giving us a long eloquent taste of the sea: '... He hadn't thought it would roll like kettledrums and swish itself on the beach ... The little man opened his eyes and his mouth, and the drift and dream of it, the weave and wave of it, the fume and foam of it, flooded into him and never left again.'

Sam's dreams turn out to be more wonderful than his expectations. To go beyond one's dreams — what exquisite delight! And that, plus Margaret Mahy's bouncy, poetic prose may make it worth the price, almost a pirate's ransom.



The Great White Man-Eating Shark (1989)

The *Horn Book* review, March/April 1990

Illustrated by Jonathan Allen.

With a perfectly straight face, Margaret Mahy tells the preposterous tale of Norvin, a self-centered boy who happens to be a good actor and who looks weirdly like a shark: 'he had small sharkish eyes, a pointed sharkish head, and sharp sharkish teeth.' Since few plays are written with interesting parts for sharks, young Norvin turns to swimming, soon becoming so expert he can 'shoot through the water like a silver arrow.'

Resentful of the other swimmers happily splashing about in the water, Norvin fashions a plastic dorsal fin like that of a great white man-eating shark; attaching it to himself, he assumes the expression of a hungry shark, slips into the water, and causes such panic he soon has the water to himself. Eventually, the people grow tired of wasting the pleasant summer days, and some of them bravely plunge again into the waves — only to flee in terror at Norvin's masquerade, which is so convincing it ultimately lures to his side a great white predatory female shark.

It is difficult to imagine a picture book with a more perfect union between its verbal and visual components. The author's voice in the fiendishly funny narrative exactly matches the absurd illustrations, featuring the changing emotions of lumpish, flat-faced men, women and children at the mercy of the wicked Norvin, a remarkably unalluring boy who nevertheless 'made rather a good-looking shark.'



The Girl Who Washed in Moonlight (1987)

Story-Go-Round: A Guide to Children's Books (<http://www.story-go-round.net.nz>), Lorraine Orman, 2005

In this slender *Sunshine Books* school reader, delicately illustrated by Robyn Belton, Margaret Mahy illuminates the universal battle between good and evil. Good is represented by the witch's young servant girl, 'so pure and clean.' Evil is embodied by the witch, 'wicked, wicked to the heart.' The girl symbolically keeps free of taint by washing herself with a magic soap given to her by her dead mother; while the witch is determined to prevent her servant's cleansing rituals. With all washing materials denied to her, the girl washes in moonlight, and the power of the light makes her strong enough to change the heart of the wicked witch.

Mahy's language is vivid and vibrant; rich with the icons and themes of classical fairytale — water, sunlight, song, flame, blood, darkness, stone. On the surface this is a simple story to help children learn to read; at the same time it's a deeply satisfying assurance to youngsters that goodness *will* triumph over badness.



Postscript

American author and Hans Christian Andersen award winner Katherine Paterson, on wonder:

... let me direct you to what your friend and mine, Margaret Mahy, had to say on the subject in a lecture she gave in 1989. Margaret tells how when she was a child, she read in a family encyclopaedia the then 'scientific fact' that the world had dropped off the sun and that it would someday come to an end. She pompously asserted this fact in the schoolyard, only to find herself chased home by unbelieving, irate schoolmates who were intent on drawing blood.

'Yet,' said Margaret, '... though the scientist who advised the editors of *Arthur Mee's Encyclopaedia* about the beginning of the world had made what I now take to be a genuine mistake, it was a mistake that fixed my attention in childhood, and (it is even tempting to think) enabled me to see something true which stayed true, even when the information turned out to be false. If so, the true thing was wonder ... and so I have come to think wonder must be a part of truth, but a part which our physical systems are anxious to conceal. A perpetual state of wonder and desire (which seems to me the truest state to be in, confronted with the universe) is certainly not the most practical state to try and live in. We are biologically engineered to have the wonder filtered out of our lives, to learn to take astonishing things for granted so that we don't waste too much energy on being surprised but get on with the eating and mating, gardening, feeding cats, complaining about taxes, and so on.*'

Yet if you know Margaret, you know that biology has failed to filter out the wonder. She is, I believe, one of the most intelligent people I have ever known, but this enormous intellectual sophistication is coupled with the most winsome childlike wonder. To be with her is to know the joy of constant new discoveries and a delight in the marvels of the everyday.

From 'In Search of Wonder' (1989) in *The Invisible Child: On Reading and Writing Books for Children* by Katherine Paterson, Dutton's Children's Books, New York, 1981, 1989, 2001, pp. 12–13.

* Margaret Mahy, 'A Dissolving Ghost', *The Arbuthnot Lectures 1980–89*, ALA-ALSC, Chicago, 1990, p. 138.