



## **New Zealand Writers: a sample of 10 of the best**

New Zealand's diverse literary tradition owes as much to its rich Māori and Polynesian heritage as it does to its pioneering history.

Before the printed word, story-telling and oratory captured the stories of Aotearoa<sup>1</sup>, New Zealand. The first book was published in New Zealand in 1830. By the 20<sup>th</sup> Century authors were expanding their literary exploration into themes of land, geographical isolation and the emergence of national identity.

Today New Zealand's pool of literary talent is vast, covering all genres and continuing to inspire readers at home and around the world.

Here is a small sample of some of our most loved writers:

Please note: high resolution images of these authors are available in the press kit "media and logos" folder copyright free and ready for publication

### **Witi Ihimaera**

The first Māori writer to publish both a book of short stories and a novel, Witi Ihimaera considers 'the world I'm in as being Māori, not European,' and his fiction develops out of this perspective. He creates imaginative new realities for his readers, drawing from autobiographical experience. In 1996 he also moved to foreground his sexuality, describing *Nights in the Gardens of Spain* as keeping faith with his gay audience. He writes new work for opera and his

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<sup>1</sup> Aotearoa [ao,tea'roa] is the most widely known and accepted Māori name for New Zealand. The word can be broken up as: *ao* = cloud, *tea* = white and *roa* = long, and it is therefore usually glossed as "the land of the long white cloud".

novel, *The Whale Rider*, has become an internationally successful feature film.

### [C K Stead](#)

C.K. Stead is one of New Zealand's foremost literary figures. He is a distinguished novelist, literary critic, poet, essayist and emeritus professor of English of the University of Auckland. Stead has won, and been nominated for, many prestigious awards and fellowships, including the Creative New Zealand Michael King Writers' Fellowship in 2005. Stead was made a Member of the Order of New Zealand (ONZ) in 2007. He is one of only two living NZ writers to hold the ONZ.

### [Kate Camp](#)

Kate Camp is currently living in Berlin after being awarded a Creative New Zealand Berlin Writers' Residency. She has been described as one of New Zealand's most startling and original poets and is also a highly regarded literature reviewer on radio. She has published four collections of poems: *Unfamiliar Legends*, *Realia*, *Beauty Sleep* and *The Mirror of Simple Annihilated Souls*. *Unfamiliar Legends* won an award at the Montana New Zealand Book Awards and *The Mirror of Simple Annihilated Souls* was recently awarded the 2011 New Zealand Post Book Award for Poetry.

### [Kate De Goldi](#)

Kate De Goldi is a short story writer, an author of young adult fiction, a children's book author and a writer of journalism articles. De Goldi also regularly reviews books on radio and television. She won the American Express and Katherine Mansfield Memorial awards for short stories, as well as the New Zealand Post Book of the Year Award in 2005 and 2009. She was named an Arts Foundation of New Zealand Laureate for 2001. *The 10pm Question* (2008) was shortlisted for, and won, the Young Adult section of the 2009 New Zealand Post Book Awards. It has just been announced that the same book has won the 2011 Corine International Book Prize Young Readers Award.

### Lloyd Jones

Lloyd Jones is an award-winning fiction writer. His first collection of short stories was published in 1991, and he has also written books for children. His bestselling novel *Mister Pip* won several illustrious prizes and awards including the 2007 Commonwealth Writers' Prize Best Book Award and the 2007 Montana Medal for fiction. It was also shortlisted for the 2007 Man Booker Prize. He has written numerous novels, and has worked as a journalist and consultant. Jones' writing is known to subvert the norms of fiction, and his narratives are challenging, original, and in some cases controversial.

### Annabel Langbein

Annabel is known for her easily prepared recipes using home-grown fresh food. Author of 18 cookbooks and star of her own television series, Annabel Langbein has established an international following. *The Free Range Cook* was named New Zealand's best celebrity cookbook for 2010 in the Gourmand World Cookbook Awards, is available in more than 70 countries and has sold over 100,000 copies. As well as being a celebrity chef and food-writer, she is now principal of Annabel Langbein Media Limited, a company providing food and lifestyle media services, including book publishing and TV and video production.

### Rachael Hale

Rachael Hale has had world-wide success as a photographer and bestselling author. Her books are available in 11 languages and have sold over 2.5 million copies. She has won numerous awards for her animal portraiture and her images have been published on calendars, posters, greeting cards and stationery in more than twenty countries. Rachael Hale received a fellowship from the New Zealand Institute of Professional Photography in 2000.

### Joy Cowley

Joy Cowley is a prolific, widely published and much-celebrated writer of fiction for adults and children. Her educational reading material is described as "learning through laughter". She has sold millions of these little reading books for children, and it is estimated 70 percent of American schools use them.

More than 40 million copies of her picture book *Mrs Wishy-Washy's Farm* have been sold worldwide. Her many awards include Children's Book of the Year, the Order of the British Empire, New Zealand Post Book Awards and the Prime Minister's Award for Literary Achievement in fiction. Joy Cowley was made a Distinguished Companion of New Zealand Order of Merit for services to children's literature in 2005.

### [Margaret Mahy](#)

Margaret Mahy is the most acclaimed of New Zealand's children's writers. The author of more than 120 titles, and translated into 15 languages, Margaret Mahy has readers across the globe. She worked as a librarian for more than 10 years before becoming a full-time writer. Mahy's books ring with humour, fantasy, adventure, science and the supernatural, but always engage with the ordinary world. Awarded the Order of New Zealand in 1993, she has also won many of the world's major prizes for children's writers, including the Carnegie Medal and the prestigious Hans Christian Andersen Award.

### [Selina Marsh](#)

Selina Tusitala Marsh is a poet and scholar. She was the first person of Pacific descent to graduate with a PhD in English from the University of Auckland, where she now lectures in Māori and Pacific literary studies. She established Pasifika Poetry, an online hub that celebrates the poetry of tagata o te moana nui, the peoples of the Pacific. Her first collection of poems, *Fast Talking PI*, was published by Auckland University Press in 2009, winning the 2010 NZSA Jessie Mackay Best First Book Award for Poetry.

The New Zealand Book Council's online Writers Files provides the most comprehensive collection of information about New Zealand writers on the Internet. Expanded information on many of the authors featured here plus others can be found by following the links provided. Or you can search through these and many others by visiting

<http://www.bookcouncil.org.nz/Writers>