



This month, we've been talking to . . . Stephanie Thatcher

Stephanie Thatcher is a graphic designer, illustrator and author, and mother of three small boys. Stephanie has always loved painting and drawing, especially drawing people. She has also always loved books, and worked at North Shore Libraries for seven years before completing a Bachelor of Visual Arts at Auckland University of Technology in 1999. Since then she has worked as a graphic designer in Auckland and Dublin, and has taken part in numerous art exhibitions. She now writes, illustrates and designs her own books.

We asked Stephanie some questions about herself, and here's what she said...

Where were you born? Where do you live now?

I was born in Auckland. I now live in Huia, West Auckland, in an old 1951 fibrolite bach held together by spider webs.

Where did you go to school? Did you have a nickname?

I went to Windy Ridge Primary and Glenfield College – just like Rachel Hunter! My brother called me all sorts of names.

What were you like in school? What is the naughtiest thing you did?

At school I was really good at art and English, but hopeless at sport. I was often the last to be chosen for sports teams. Sometimes I drew caricatures of the teachers.

What was your favourite book growing up?

I was a big reader so there are loads, but some of my absolute favourites were *Jennie* by Paul Gallico, *The Lord of the Rings* by J.R.R. Tolkien, *The Brothers Lionheart* by Astrid Lindgren, and *The Land Behind the World* by Anne Spencer Parry.

Who is your favourite children's author?

Roald Dahl and Margaret Mahy.

What is your favourite food/colour/movie?

I love salty savoury food like hot crispy salty chips. My favourite colour is the green of spring leaves on a tree. *Cabaret* is my favourite movie.

Who inspired you to write/illustrate?

My own three children continue to inspire me.

How did you get started? How old were you?

I have wanted to make children's books since I was very young, but it wasn't until I did a night class with Sandra Morris that the dream came true. I was 40.

Why did you want to be a writer/illustrator?

I just love picture books. To make picture books myself is my absolute dream job.

How do you think up ideas?

The ideas come flying into my muddled head when I least expect them.

Do you have a special place where you write/illustrate?

I often work at the dinner table with my cat sprawled out across the paper.

What is the best thing about being an author/illustrator?

It's great when kids come up to me after a reading and shyly tell me that they like to write and draw too.

Have you had a funny or embarrassing moment as an author/illustrator?

When I do readings at primary schools I pretty much always do something embarrassing, like drop my drawings or forget the words to the story.

What do you do when you are not writing/illustrating?

I do a bit of graphic design work and run around after my three young boys.

What would you have chosen to be if you were not an author/illustrator?

I'd love to work at the zoo looking after the elephants and giraffes.

Which famous person from the past would you like to talk to?

Frida Kahlo or Vincent Van Gogh would be interesting. I'd like to watch them paint.

Is there anything else you would like to tell us about yourself?

I can touch my nose with my tongue.

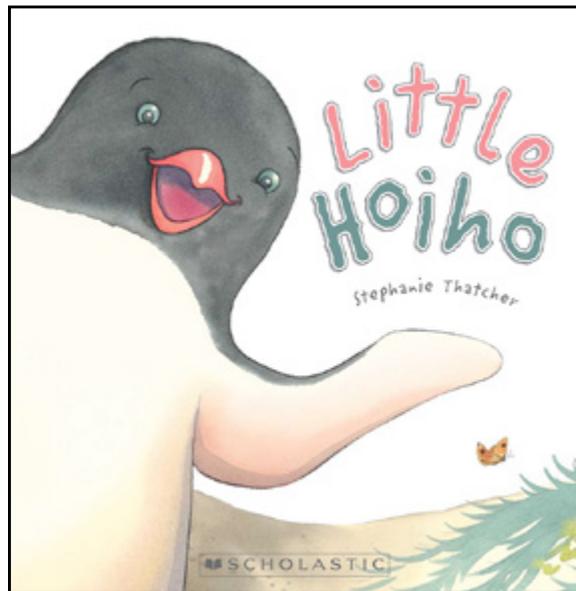
Awards received:

Storylines Notable Book Award 2014 for *The Quiet Pirate*

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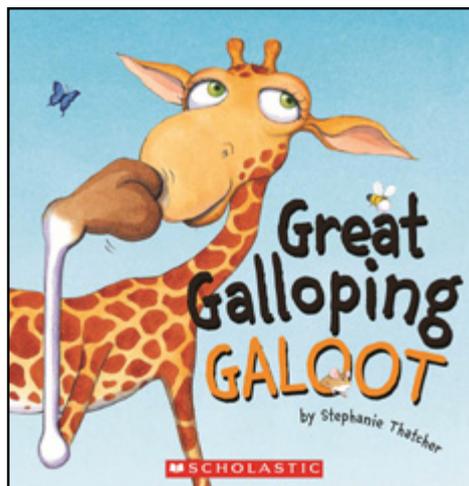
Little Hoiho

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Age	3-7 years



Great Galloping Galoot

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