

Edge-of-seat auction wins Puffin Books a rare find

It's not often that publishers come across such striking new talent as Meg Rosoff. The feeling that a rare gem had been discovered ran so strong among the team at Puffin Books that the following passionate responses were evoked:

'Meg Rosoff is a truly remarkable writer and a wonderful find for Puffin. We are immensely proud to be publishing her.' Francesca Dow, Managing Director of Puffin Books.

Rebecca McNally, Puffin's Fiction Publisher said, 'I have never read anything like this. The writing is immensely powerful and seductive, it draws you into an almost dream-like, beautiful bubble of a world, with romance and a sense of magic, of endless summer - and then this wonderful world explodes, with a war that tears a family apart, and a journey that you travel every step of with the characters.'

'It reminds me of Dodie Smith's *I Capture the Castle*. The way she portrays the painful yet exhilarating transition from childhood to adulthood blew me away.' Elaine McQuade, Puffin's Marketing Director.

The sale of **Meg Rosoff's** dazzling debut novel resulted in an edge-of-seat auction involving four of the UK's leading children's publishers. Rebecca McNally, Puffin's Fiction Publisher, who was in New York on business at the time, was roused from her bed at 6am to talk to the author and continue her bidding. Rebecca finally clinched the deal and acquired UK and Commonwealth rights to ***How I Live Now*** from Catherine Clarke of Felicity Bryan.

Random House children's books in the US have since bought *How I Live Now* for a substantial six figure sum and further foreign rights are currently running into auction.

How I Live Now is narrated by Daisy, a 15-year-old New Yorker who is dispatched by her father to live with her eccentric English cousins. But just as she begins to get used to the beautiful chaos of her new life in the depths of the English countryside, and finds herself falling in love, the family's life is ripped apart by the invasion of a foreign army. In the crisis that follows, Daisy has to make a journey she never anticipated.

Meg Rosoff was born in Boston, USA, majored in English at Harvard University, spent a brief spell at St Martin's College of Art in London studying sculpture in 1977, fell in love with England and returned to Britain to live permanently in 1989. She has had a long career in advertising and is currently senior creative director at advertising agency J Walter Thompson. She lives in London with her husband, Paul Hamlyn, painter and illustrator for the Observer and their daughter.

***How I Live Now* by Meg Rosoff will be published by Puffin Books
in the Autumn of 2004.**