

The Kelpies Prize is supported by



## PRESS RELEASE

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# Robot Chickens, Brainwashed Boys and Kids in Space are Shortlisted for the Kelpies Prize 2013

Edinburgh-based publisher Floris Books today announces the shortlist for the Kelpies Prize 2013. The annual prize is for previously unpublished works of fiction, set in contemporary Scotland and suitable for children aged 8 to 12. Since the end of February deadline, judges have been busy reading their way through the largest number of manuscripts to date to decide on the final three.

The 2013 shortlist (in alphabetical order) is:

- *Never Back* by Barbara Henderson
- *Attack of the Giant Robot Chickens* by Alex McCall
- *The Great Moon Mission* by Shona McQuilken

Details of the shortlisted books and authors can be found on the reverse of this press release.

The winner of the Kelpies Prize 2013 will be announced at a ceremony at the Edinburgh International Book Festival on Thursday 22nd August 2013. The winning author will receive a £2,000 cash prize and have their book published in the Kelpies imprint.

This year, the prize will be presented by well-known children's author Vivian French, who has published well over 200 books, including the Tales from the Five Kingdoms series. She is sure to be an inspiration for the shortlisted authors.

The three shortlisted books are all brilliantly original. *Never Back* is an exciting thriller about two boys, brainwashed into forgetting their past, who set out on a dangerous journey to discover who they really are. *Attack of the Giant Robot Chickens* is a hilarious apocalyptic adventure set in Aberdeen; Primary 7s are jetting off to the moon in the action-packed space race adventure *The Great Moon Mission*.

Floris Books is confident that this year's winner will be just as popular as previous Kelpies Prize success stories. This year Floris made history when three authors, all discovered through the Kelpies Prize, were shortlisted together for the prestigious Scottish Children's Book Awards 2013, making it a Kelpies-only shortlist.

Sally Polson, Commissioning Editor for Floris Books, said:

"This year we were thrilled to receive more entries than ever before for the Kelpies Prize. Humour featured strongly, so the judging process was a lot of fun. The Kelpies Prize is an amazing opportunity to discover gifted new voices and in fact many of our wonderful authors have come to us through the prize. I'm sure that this year's winner, whoever that may be, will be just as successful."

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## Notes for Editors

1. Floris Books is an independent publisher based in Edinburgh. Established over 30 years ago, it is the largest children's publisher in Scotland.
2. The Kelpies range, published by Floris Books since 2002, comprises over 60 children's novels set in Scotland or with Scottish themes, suitable for children from 8 to 12 years old.
3. 2013 marks the 10th anniversary of the publication of Floris Books' first original Kelpie novel.
4. The Kelpies and Kelpies Prize are supported by Creative Scotland.

## More Information

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[www.florissbooks.co.uk/kelpiesprize](http://www.florissbooks.co.uk/kelpiesprize) (includes press materials)

See over for info on the shortlisted books and authors

## The Kelpies Prize Shortlist 2013

### *Never Back* by Barbara Henderson

TJ and Levi have no memory of their life before New Dawn. All that's left are disturbing dreams and the anxious wait until the Authorities deem them ready for re-integration so they can leave the remote institute in the Scottish countryside.

When the boys realise everything at New Dawn is not as it seems, they go looking for everything, and everyone, they left behind. But the Authorities won't just let them go. Can they discover their past before their present catches up with them?

**Barbara Henderson** was born in Germany but has lived in Scotland since 1991. She has taught English and Drama and started her own small puppetry business – writing, producing and performing original plays – but found that writing was what she loved most. Barbara won the Nairn Festival Short Story Competition in 2012. She currently lives in Inverness and teaches part-time while pursuing her ambition to have a novel published.



### *Attack of the Giant Robot Chickens* by Alex McCall

Why did the chicken cross the road? To start the giant robot chicken apocalypse, of course.

There's something fowl going on in Aberdeen. The town is being terrorised by giant robotic chickens determined to peck out the last sign of human resistance. It's been eight months since the chickens stole everyone over 15 and left the remaining children to band together into factions.

Now Jesse and his friends are determined not to let the chickens rule the roost any longer so they set about hatching a plan to stop the feathered fiends.

But what eggsactly do the chickens want and how will the gang stop them?

**Alex McCall** grew up in Aberdeen, which may be why it is the first city he has destroyed in print. He is currently studying Filmmaking and Screenwriting at the University of the West of Scotland. He has published several poetry and short story anthologies and manages a blog called Skald's Tavern.



### *The Great Moon Mission* by Shona McQuilken

Primary 7 were expecting canoeing and sailing for their class trip, not the chance to jet off to the moon!

Only ten kids can blast off to Space Camp, and Jimmy is determined to beat his classmates to this incredible prize. But first he must ace the challenges set by the mysterious Mr Ice. As the tasks get more and more dangerous, the children begin to wonder what this great moon mission is *really* about. Maybe it's got something to do with strange lights in the sky, footballs beamed off the ground, and disappearing pets!

As their real mission is revealed, Jimmy and his friends find themselves in a race against time, and slime, to save Earth from some little green men.

**Shona McQuilken** was born and brought up in Cambuslang, in the south-east of Glasgow. When the careers advisor at school told her that being an author wasn't a proper job, she decided to become a scientist instead. She has worked as a scientific researcher and lecturer in Glasgow, London and the Caribbean. *The Great Moon Mission* combines her two passions of science and writing.



## Kelpies Prize 2014

Manuscripts are now invited for submission to the **Kelpies Prize 2014**. They must be set wholly, or mainly, in Scotland and be suitable for children aged 8 to 12. They may not have been previously commercially published, although the author may have been. The judges are looking primarily for a cracking story with strong characters, believable dialogue and a compelling atmosphere. The deadline is 28 February 2014.

For full rules and guidelines, see [www.florisbooks.co.uk/kelpiesprize](http://www.florisbooks.co.uk/kelpiesprize)