

## BRIDGET VAN DER ZIJPP

AUTHOR

*Bridget's novel **I Laugh Me Broken** was released by Victoria University Press in September.*

I've just taken a wild ride through a near-future beset with water shortages and rapacious "wealthugees" with Kirsten McDougall's new book, *She's a Killer*. The prickly main character Alice, who is quite possibly a fully-fledged sociopath, is fond of witty one-liners and edges towards some highly disruptive behaviour in a very memorable way. Set in Wellington, it's definitely a fun read for the end of an unreal year.

I loved Megan Dunn's deadpan memoir/essay collection *Things I Learned in Art School*. It irreverently traverses a lot of territory including an early start in Huntly, moving to a sad flat over a rest home, obsessions with things like Western Barbie, Smurfs and the poem *Desiderata*, and later working as a bartender/receptionist in a massage parlour near K'Rd, her time at Elam Art School and ending, poignantly, in an ICU ward with her mother. It's quite startling and self-deprecating, but also thoughtful and

exploratory and very revealing in a wise-cracking kind of way.

My favourite gift-giving book this year has been Catharina van Bohemen's *Towards Compostela: Walking the Camino de Santiago*. Not only is it a beautiful object with lovely little drawings by Gregory O'Brien, but in a year when we are unable to travel anywhere, it's such a pleasure to take this journey alongside Catharina. We experience all the blisters and rain and challenges of finding a place to sleep, but also meet interesting

people on the path and are carried along by her musings on the history of the walk and her recently failed marriage.

Ideally I'll be somewhere beachy over the Christmas break, so it would be nice to have a book of poetry on hand to dip into. Perhaps Anne Kennedy's *The Sea Walks into a Wall*. Recently honoured in the 2021 Prime Minister's Awards for Literary Achievement, Anne's work is always witty and clever and passionate, so I am sure her latest collection will give me plenty to play over in my head as the waves roll in.

