



# IRIS AND ME

## PHILIPPA WERRY

To be released March 2023

ISBN 978-1-99-115084-4

B format • soft cover • verse novel • 182pp • RRP \$25

### ONE WOMAN. ONE JOURNEY. ONE TRUE FRIEND.

*This is the story  
of a long journey  
and a true friend.*

*It is the story of other things, too:  
sisters (three)  
ships (many)  
secrets (a multitude) ...*

*I don't have a name of my own,  
but my friend does.  
Her name is Iris.*

So begins the story of Iris Wilkinson, who wrote poetry, novels and journalism under the pen name Robin Hyde. In January 1938, she left New Zealand for England. On the way, intrigued by glimpses of China, she ventured inland despite the war raging there, becoming one of the first women war correspondents – a feat that was all the more remarkable because she struggled with mental health and suffered a disability that meant she had a lifelong limp. Robin Hyde doesn't tell her story – it is narrated by a loyal but mysterious companion who asks the reader to guess the secret.

*Iris and Me* is an imaginative account of the adventures of one of Aotearoa's most significant writers, presented in a form that Hyde herself would have loved – the verse novel. It was the runner-up for the NZSA Laura Solomon Cuba Press Prize 2022.

- Fictionalised biography for young adults of Robin Hyde, one of NZ's most significant writers of fiction, poetry and journalism
- Launching alongside an illustrated book of Robin Hyde's poems, *The Uppish Hen*

**"Breathtaking. Nuanced. Unforgettable."**

— Paula Green

**"Iris dared to do the things that women weren't supposed to do; Philippa Werry has dared to step outside the square and tell Robin Hyde's life in poetic snapshots ... I reckon Iris would've approved."** — Tina Shaw



Philippa Werry is a Wellington writer of fiction, non-fiction, poetry and plays. Her books include award finalists *Anzac Day*, *The Telegram* and *This Is Where I Stand*.

[www.philippawerry.co.nz](http://www.philippawerry.co.nz)



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# Another Robin Hyde title launching in March



## *The Uppish Hen & other poems*

Robin Hyde

*illustrated by Dine*

ISBN 978-1-98-859565-8

### **The Uppish Hen**

*The uppish little bantam hen  
May lay an egg just now and then —  
She never gives a thought to me,  
With only marrow-bones for tea —*

*Whereas my chocolate-coloured duck,  
By sheer good management and pluck,  
Lays one or more green eggs a day  
And says she likes the good old way.*

In 1934, four-year-old Derek Challis found a homemade book in his Christmas stocking. On the typed pages bound with pink ribbon were poems written for him by his mother, the writer Robin Hyde. Derek — known as Derry — treasured the gift and could recite the poems until his death in 2021.

Hyde hoped the collection would be published “one fine day” and that fine day has come.