

New York, May 16, 2007

**Roaring Brook has acquired U.S. rights at auction to The Midnight Charter, 22-year-old David Whitley's dazzling fantasy-thriller for young readers.**

Rights to *The Midnight Charter* have been auctioned simultaneously in territories around the world, with Penguin acquiring rights in the U.K. and Commonwealth, Doubleday in Canada, Goldmann in Germany, Longanesi in Italy, Dutch Media Group in Holland, Motibo in Greece, and Sesam in Denmark. The book was acquired for Roaring Brook by Publisher Simon Boughton. Auctions were conducted by Whitley's London-based agent, Charlie Viney of Mulcahy and Viney Ltd.

*The Midnight Charter* is set in an insular city-state where anything can be bought and sold. Trade is the only way of life, and debt is death. A successful elite rules, plague festers in the slums, and children are possessions until their twelfth birthday. In the ancient tower of Count Stelli, two children, Lily and Mark, meet. Both have been sold into servitude. At first, their only goal is to work and to survive until they realize that they can each shape their own destiny.

Publisher Simon Boughton, who acquired the book for Roaring Brook, said: "*The Midnight Charter* is in the tradition of great children's fantasies, from C.S. Lewis to Philip Pullman: it's both a thrilling adventure story, and a book with a clear and compelling moral vision. We're very, very pleased to be publishing it—and to welcome David Whitley to the Roaring Brook list at the beginning of his career."



**David Whitley** was born in 1984 and graduated from the University of Oxford with a double First in English Literature and a passion for writing children's fiction. At age 17 his first children's novel was shortlisted for the Kathleen Fidler Award and at 20 he won the Cheshire Prize for Literature for a children's short story, the youngest writer ever to win this prestigious award.

Roaring Brook Press is a division of Holtzbrinck Publishers, U.S.A.

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