Press Release 30 May 2016

# Meg Rosoff Accepts Astrid Lindgren Memorial Award Before Full Stockholm Concert Hall

**Meg Rosoff tonight received the** **Astrid Lindgren Memorial Award from Swedish Minister for Culture and Democracy Mrs. Alice Bah Kuhnke. In her acceptance speech she expressed both praise and criticism.**

Rosoff spoke joyfully but also gravely. She expressed pleasure and pride at being recognized for her work as an author. She also described a sense of sorrow for today’s world of child refugees, leaders who know too little about the importance of art, music, and literature for young people, and societies that value lawyers and bankers more than teachers and librarians.

Meg Rosoff emphasized the importance of the imagination, quoting Astrid Lindgren: “Everything great that happened in this world happened first in someone’s imagination.”

* It is a great honour and a great responsibility to carry on the work that Astrid Lindgren began. I am not only grateful for the recognition this prize brings, but for a country that puts such tremendous value on children’s books and children’s imaginations.

In her congratulatory speech, Minister Bah Kuhnke mentioned difficulties facing young people today:

* Teenage-years are a bit like no man´s land. No one is invited to come close and there are no clear sign posts for direction. It is comfortable for the rest of us to keep it on a certain distance. And it can be awfully difficult to dig into our teenagers’ emotions since it forces us to reflect on our own lives. Someone who doesn´t fear this is this year’s laurate of the Astrid Lindgren Memorial Award; Meg Rosoff.

Musical entertainment was provided by Malena Ernman and Bo Kasper’s Orchestra. Hamid Khemiri read from Rosoff’s novel, *What I Was*. The ceremony was hosted by Stockholm City Librarian Katti Hoflin.

**For further information, please contact:**

Helene Oljons, Communications Officer

Tel +46(0)765401025

E-mail: helene.oljons@kulturradet.se

The Astrid Lindgren Memorial Award (ALMA) is the world's largest prize for children's and young adult literature. The award, which amounts to SEK 5 million, is awarded annually to a single recipient or to several. Authors, illustrators, oral storytellers and those active in reading promotion may be rewarded. The award is designed to promote interest in children's and young adult literature, and in children's rights, globally. An expert jury selects the winners from candidates nominated by institutions and organizations worldwide. The Astrid Lindgren Memorial Award is administered by the Swedish Arts Council.