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Faces of Pride

Meet two more community figures
 worth getting to know

Raining Accolades

Author Wood wins awards for portrayal of queer
 boys in love and danger



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Like her namesake, the warrior princess in the *Lord of the Rings* trilogy, Eowyn Wood doesn't shy away from a challenge. Her two-part authorial debut, novels *Naked in the Rain* and *Afterglow*, tackles sensitive and provocative subject matter.

"I was concerned [about how readers would respond] because there's some pretty controversial issues. The main character is young and ends up having sex with older men," Wood explains. The novels tell the story of two boys who flee their troubled lives to find themselves, and their love for one another, in a world filled with drugs and child prostitution—heavy material for a debut novel.

For Wood, the first taste of published life turned out to be the sweetest. *Naked in the Rain* (2007) won numerous awards—it was named the winner in both the Next Generation Indie Awards (2008) and the National Best Books 2007 Awards from *USA Book News* in the GLBT category. It also took home silver in *ForeWord Magazine's* 2007 Book of the Year Awards' GLBT category.

Former *Curve* editor Diane Anderson-Minshall compared the novel to *My Own Private Idaho*, saying that it asked "readers to determine whether it's a modern subversive fairytale or a gritty post-gay drama."

So where did the 41-year-old bisexual Portlander find inspiration for a set of novels about Brian, an 11-year-old bisexual piano prodigy, and River, a 14-year-old gay tough guy?

"The main character, Brian, I started inventing him because of the band Placebo. I had seen some interviews and videos of them—the singer [Brian Molko] is bisexual and the lyrics are very open about that," Wood explains.

Beyond providing inspiration for Brian's character, music plays a key role in prefacing the novels' chapters, particularly in *Naked in the Rain*.

"I was concerned [about how readers would respond] because there's some pretty controversial issues. The main character is young and ends up having sex with older men."

—EOWYN WOOD

"I have always had a great love of music. I just decided, wouldn't it be fun to start each chapter with lyrics?" Wood explains.

Now that *Afterglow* is out—and racking up awards of its own—Wood is taking a break from the decade-long project. She admits she has other ideas percolating, but plans to focus on her work at Cascade AIDS Project, her side job editing for Crooked Hills Publishing and spending time with her partner and pets.

Still, she foreshadows, "I've considered continuing this series."

For more information, visit eowynwood.com.

—ERIN ROOK