

2017 BOOK COMPETITION JURY

Mayan Smith-Gobat



Mayan grew up in the New Zealand mountains with a strong affinity to nature. She began alpine climbing at age 16, yet quickly shifted her focus to the physical challenges of rock climbing. After finishing school, she took up professional skiing for several years, until an accident caused her focus to return to her true passion: rock climbing.

Since 2001, Mayan has dedicated herself to climbing, both in competition climbing and outdoors. Her single-minded focus, determination, and hard work resulted in her quickly becoming one of New Zealand's best climbers, and the first Kiwi woman to climb 5.14b/8c. Her focus soon shifted from bouldering and competitions to excel in traditional climbing and free-climbing big walls. She established new semi-alpine free routes on the huge granite walls in the south of New Zealand, then went on to advance her skills in Yosemite Valley. Here, Mayan became the second woman to free climb the Salathe Wall, 5.13b/8a+ (1000m), and lowered the female speed record on the Nose (1000m) to 4.43 hours, also achieving a mixed gender record of 3.29 hours. She then took the next logical step and started to apply these skills to alpine walls in remote areas such as Patagonia, where she and Ines Papert made good progress in freeing the historic route Riders on the Storm.

Now, Mayan is dedicated to becoming a stronger, better climber with the goal of combining her love of pushing her limits in the vertical world with travel and discovering remote, untouched places in the world - developing new routes and, through writing and multi-media presentations, inspiring others to push their boundaries and step out of their own comfort zones.

David Stevenson



David Stevenson has written two mountaineering books - most recently an essay collection, *Warnings Against Myself: Meditations on a Life in Climbing*, and the short story collection, *Letters from Chamonix*, winner of the Banff Mountain Book Award for Fiction in 2014. He has worked as the book review editor of *The American Alpine Journal* since 1995. In 2017 he was awarded the H. Adams Carter Literary Award by the American Alpine Club. He is a professor of English at the University of Alaska Anchorage where he directs the MFA program in creative writing. A climber since the early 1970's, he remains active in the Church, Talkeetnas, and the Alaska Range.

Ian Welsted



For two decades, Ian was obsessed with alpine climbing. After an apprenticeship in the Canadian Rockies, he progressed to establishing first ascents, then expeditions to Alaska, Patagonia, Pakistan, and Nepal. At first convinced the pursuit was an intensely personal endeavor, he was rewarded with indelible friendships and experiences. Receiving the 2014 Piolets d'Or prompted Ian to reassess his solipsistic view of the sport. In this new phase he is sharing his love of the mountain world through writing and guiding.