

SIMON'S TOWN

Kids' art almost engulfed in flames

ENGELA DUVENAGE

If some of the scenery in a new South African children's Bible looks familiar, it might be because the illustrations were done by Simon's Town artist Marie Prinsloo.

"There might even be a friend or two who might be able to recognise themselves in the illustrations of some of the Bible characters," she admits.

Last year she teamed up with Table View freelance journalist and children's book writer Wendy Maartens to illustrate *Bible Stories for Children*. It is published by Struik Children/ Penguin Random House South Africa, and is also available in Afrikaans as *Bybelstories vir Kinders*.

Prinsloo used acrylic paint to give bold life to Maartens's interpretation of more than 50 Bible stories. She gave it a definitive South African feeling by including elements such as proteas, lions and local bird species.

After almost eight months' worth of work, the last panels were delivered to the publishers four days before the Prinsloo family house partially burnt down in early June.

"The bookshelf on which I kept the finished panels burnt out completely, but by God's grace the work was already at the editors," she remembers thankfully.

Prinsloo says the seascapes of False Bay have been a great source of inspiration ever since her family moved into their home in Glencairn Heights a decade ago.

Her bright, playful paintings featuring lighthouses, local architecture and fishing boats are well-known to those frequenting the Chameleon Gallery in Kalk Bay. Her paintings also hang in the Bay Gallery in Langebaan and the Stone Fish Gallery in Paternoster on the West Coast.

The children's Bible is her first foray into illustrating a full-length book. Since school she has, however, developed a very particular illustrative style

which is recognised for its use of bright and bold colours. No pastel shades for this artist!

She recently produced her own series of cards and calendars.

Prinsloo also gives a monthly art class to local residents, who have all been inspired by her creativity and passion for life.

Prinsloo grew up in Oudtshoorn, and studied Fine Art at Stellenbosch University.

Before settling in Glencairn Heights with their children Ivan and Marguerite, she lived with her husband Stefan in Belgium, the Netherlands, Centurion and Paarl, among other places.

Marie Prinsloo, with the Afrikaans edition of the new Bible Stories for Children she illustrated.

PHOTO: ENGELA DUVENAGE

