

Dave Mason Reflects on Research, Memory, and Identity in *Between the Clouds and the River*

An extended interview explores the historical research and quiet human legacies that shaped Mason's World War II-rooted novel.

SYDNEY, NSW, AUSTRALIA, January 9, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Author [Dave Mason](#) appears in a recent extended interview discussing the historical research and personal questions that shaped his novel [Between the Clouds and the River](#), a work rooted in World War II and its long, often unseen consequences.



Dave Mason in conversation with Paul Rushworth-Brown during a Down Under Interviews discussion on *Between the Clouds and the River*.

Rather than focusing on combat or spectacle, Mason's novel turns inward. The story moves between two lives separated by decades but linked by circumstance: Bernhardt Lang, a young German soldier struggling to survive the war in North Africa, and Joseph Holliman, a twelve-year-old boy growing up in western North America during the 1960s, forced into adulthood far too early. Though their worlds are distant, both characters navigate questions of belonging, identity, and the lives they inherit rather than choose.

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Mason's novel explores how war continues long after the fighting ends — carried quietly through memory, identity, and the lives people inherit rather than choose.”

Amanda Smith, Down Under Interviews

In the interview, Mason speaks about the research that first drew him to the story, particularly his discovery of the large number of German prisoners of war held in the United States and Canada. Many were employed as paid labourers and formed complicated relationships within the communities around them. A small number disappeared altogether. Those gaps in the historical record, Mason says, raised questions that felt both historical and deeply human.

communities around them. A small number disappeared altogether. Those gaps in the historical record, Mason says, raised questions that felt both historical and deeply human.

The novel grew out of that tension — between official records and private lives, between the names people are given and the ones they live under, and between what history documents and what families carry without explanation. Mason describes identity as something shaped not only by choice, but by accident, geography, and silence.

Since its publication in September 2024, *Between the Clouds and the River* has received literary recognition and awards, resonating with readers drawn to historically grounded fiction that resists simple moral conclusions. Mason's work has been noted for its restraint and emotional depth, particularly in its treatment of war's lasting effects on ordinary lives.

The conversation also touches on Mason's approach to writing. He speaks about allowing characters to develop their own internal logic over time, and about the challenge of writing lives unlike his own without flattening them into symbols. For Mason, the task is not to explain history, but to inhabit it carefully.

The full interview is available in both video and audio formats, allowing audiences to engage with the complete discussion rather than condensed excerpts.

About Dave Mason

Dave Mason is the author of *Between the Clouds and the River* and *EO-N*. His fiction explores identity, belonging, and the long human shadows cast by historical events. He divides his time between Bozeman, Montana, and Lunenburg, Nova Scotia.

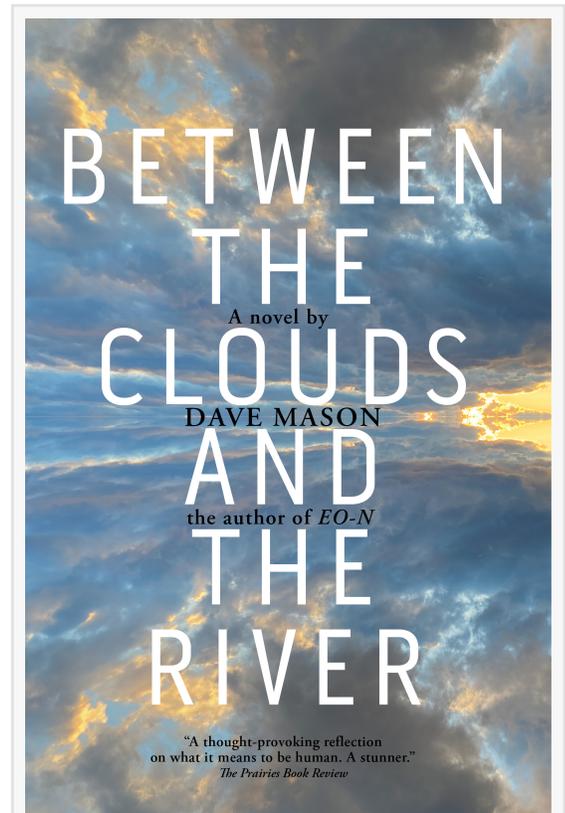
About [Down Under Interviews](#)

Down Under Interviews is a long-form interview series hosted by Australian author Paul Rushworth-Brown, featuring extended conversations with writers about craft, research, and the personal origins of their work.

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Cover of *Between the Clouds and the River* by Dave Mason.

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