

Award-Winning Vermont Author Mike Magluilo Releases YA Novel Undiscovered Country

New novel from DartFrog Books blends coming-of-age fiction with magical realism in a story Midwest Book Review calls “powerful” and a “standout.”

CORNWALL, VT, UNITED STATES, July 28, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- [DartFrog Books](#) announces the release of [Undiscovered Country](#), a new young adult novel by award-winning Vermont author Mike Magluilo. Set in the fictional small town of Hamlet, Vermont, the novel explores grief, family expectations, neurodivergence, friendship, and the complicated process of discovering who we are when the people and assumptions that once defined us begin to fall away.

“

Many unexpectedly delightful facets stem from this blend of magical realism and environmental observation, making the novel a standout.”

Midwest Book Review

Teenager Imogen “Bissie” has just buried her brother Jeremy when she discovers an injured turtle and becomes

determined to save it. For Bissie, the rescue offers something immediate and tangible to hold onto at a moment when the rest of her life seems to be coming apart.

Bissie's family struggled to understand Jeremy's neurodivergence and the person he wanted to become long before his death. Bissie, his advocate and ally, is now known at school as "the girl with the dead brother." Her competitive swimming is faltering, and her growing friendship with Savannah—a girl carrying family trauma of her own—is attracting unwanted attention in their small Vermont town.

Then Turtle begins appearing in Bissie's dreams.

When a box containing Jeremy's secret sketchbooks surfaces, Bissie is forced to reconsider what she thought she knew about her brother, her family, friendship and intimacy—and the expectations people place upon one another in the name of love.

Midwest Book Review praised the novel for taking YA fiction in unexpected directions:

“Undiscovered Country blends magical realism into a story that develops in unexpected ways not typically presented to YA readers at this age level, creating a powerful story of growth, healing, and discovery. Especially highly recommended for book clubs and reading groups seeking fodder for discussions about adaptation, change, and acceptance.”

The review also called the novel a “standout,” noting its distinctive combination of magical realism, environmental observation, and coming-of-age storytelling.

“Mike has written the kind of YA novel that respects the intelligence and emotional complexity of its readers,” said Gordon McClellan, founder and publisher of DartFrog Books. “Undiscovered Country is funny, painful, surprising, and deeply human. It asks difficult questions about grief, identity, neurodivergence, and the expectations we place on the people we love, but it never tells readers what they are supposed to think. This is a book that stays with you—and one that I think will lead to some remarkable conversations between young adults, parents, teachers, and book clubs.”

Magluilo brings both humor and tenderness to Bissie’s journey, using the personalities and places of small-town Vermont—and the occasionally unsettling wisdom of Turtle—to explore what happens when acceptance requires letting go of the future we imagined for someone else.

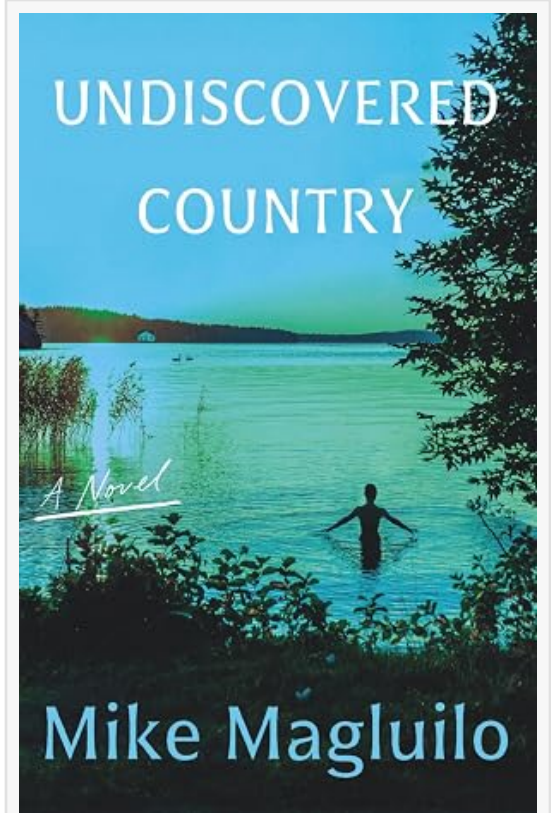
Undiscovered Country is recommended for young adult readers ages 15 and older and for adult readers of coming-of-age fiction.

About the Author

Mike Magluilo is a writer living in Vermont. His previous novel, [A Reason to Run](#), published by Rootstock Publishing, was awarded a Silver Medal by the Independent Publishers of New England in 2024. His short fiction has appeared in Flash Fiction Magazine, Cold Lake Anthology, and Zig Zag Lit Mag. His short story “The Golden Boy” took first place in Flash Fiction Magazine’s summer 2023 writing contest.

Book Information

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