

All Authors Magazine

Issue 11



Vision Degrees Celsius



The Heat of Change

Vision: The power to anticipate that which will or may be.

Degrees: Any of a series of steps or stages, as in a process or course of action.

Celsius: A scale of measurement that denotes whether something is freezing or boiling

I was once told/taught that there is power in words. About a year ago I made a choice. The choice was that I needed a change.

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About a year ago I made a choice. The choice was that I needed a change.

I'd been living in Florida for some time. Florida is grand for some people, but the honest truth is that it isn't made for me. I can't take the heat.

No, I'm serious ... I don't like the heat. Some might call me crazy, but I rebut that way of thinking with a simple "I was born in the midst of a blizzard, on a very cold January day, in New York." instantly the light comes on and they realize that I was just made for cold weather. Suffice it to say, that I was always hot and not all too happy.

I was like



All! The! Time!

I'm not a fan ... not a fan...!

So, I picked up the phone while panting.

I said, "I have made up my mind. I am moving!" She responded with a "Are you sure?" in kind, and I replied, "I don't know how and I don't know when, but I've never been more sure about anything in my life. I will make it happen somehow."

She replied with an "Okay" and that was that. She's always known this about me; when I say I'm going to do something, I am going to do it. I may not always know how it will happen, but when my mind is made up to put my foot forward and do it, I do.

Like when I said that I was going to make this magazine come to life. She said, "Jazz, are you sure? Is this something you really want to do?"

When I replied "Yes." she said, "Then I have your back 100%."

Almost 2 years later and here we are.

What most people don't realize is the potency and impact of their own words.

Per Quantum Physics, scientists suggests that everything is made up up energy. That includes you and I.

The funniest part of it all is that typically Religion and Science don't see eye to eye, yet we find that many religions are opening their minds to that prospect as well. So we have two groups of people on opposite sides of the theology spectrum seeming to agree on one thing.

Everything is made up of energy.

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Now think of this ...

It take energy to create words. Whether that energy is implemented emotionally or absentmindedly, there is energy put forth regardless.

When I decided to create the All Authors Magazine, when I decided that Florida was just too hot for me and I needed an out, I put out energy into the Universe which had provided it to me in the first place and the Universe heard my call.

The energy that surrounds us on a daily basis is what makes our word, whether positive or negative, come into fruition.



Now, lets take a closer look at this Issue's Theme.

“Vision Degrees Celsius”, more than anything, speaks of the power of energy.

If we look at the meaning of these words we can undoubtedly conclude that it is: the power to anticipate something, then take a series of steps, putting it into action.

Furthermore, it implies that it is up to us to measure whether our “vision” is hot or cold.

Trust the Universe, make up your mind, take the steps you need to take, employ your energy and your dreams will come into fruition.

Think of this, this summer:

Live every day hence forth with Vision Degrees Celsius.

Love,



We would like to take a moment and thank the participants of this issue of All Authors Magazine, who are as follows:

Nicola J. McDonagh
AACE Recipient

Jane Yates
Coffee Time with Y.

Luis Gonzalez
Author Interview

Poet Kerry B
Poetry Unleashed

Synful Desire
Awesome Covers

Vising Lilly
Featured Book

The Royal Truth
Guest Article

Along with two columnists, making their All Authors Magazine debuts:

Frederick H. Crook
The Crook Analysis

and

Douglas Boren
Historical Harbor

And of course, the rest of our beloved columnists for this issue:

A. Lopez, Jr.

Harmony Kent

Beem Weeks

Queen of Spades

Y. Correa

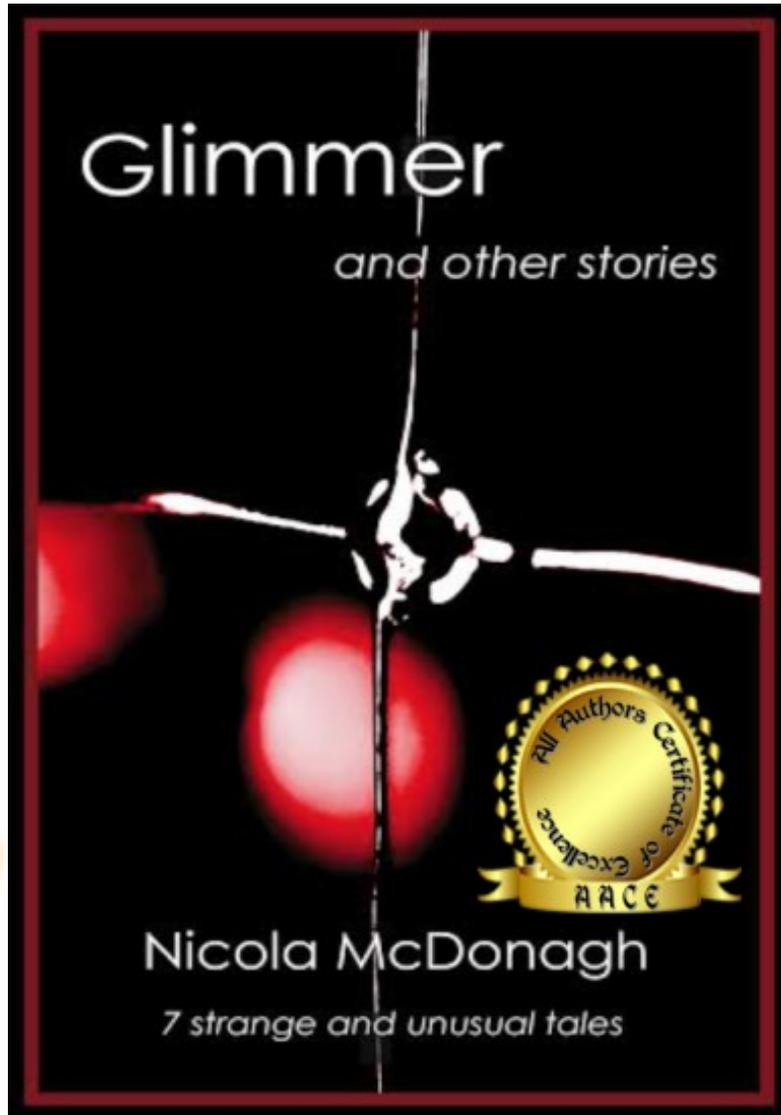


All Authors Certificate of Excellence

Meet Newest AACE Recipient, Nicola J. McDonagh

Author Of

"Glimmer and other stories"



All Authors Certificate of Excellence is an award given to Authors whose books we find merit in. We hand pick each and every author, personally having read said author's work. We pride ourselves in knowing that the person who receives the **AACE** is a deserving individual who has demonstrated all of the qualities we hold dear in his/her works.

They are: authenticity, creativity and excellence of execution.

It is for those reasons why **Nicola J. McDonagh** was chosen, for she displayed these characteristics in her short story collection called "**Glimmer and other stories**". This is first time that **All Authors** bestows this award to an anthology, however its presentation is superb and the stories are spectacular.

Mrs. McDonagh has a talent for presenting readers with compelling characters and exceptional plots. There is never a dull moment when picking up "**Glimmer and other stories**". The reader becomes enthralled and enchanted.

"**Glimmer and other stories**" plays with your mind and has enormous richness. Many readers believe that the prose are poetic and therefore find the stories therein magnificently portrayed.

Congratulations!



Acceptance Speech

'CONGRATULATIONS! You have been selected to be a recipient of the All Authors Certificate of Excellence for your work on Glimmer and other stories!'

Wow! I was taken aback when I received this e-mail from Y. Correa, President of AAPP. To be acknowledged for 'excellence' with my short story anthology, was amazing. Especially when it comes from talented writers who know what they are talking about. The dedication and tireless support All Authors Publications and Promotions have for Indie authors is legendary, so being honoured in this way from an organization that stands for quality, is a humbling experience.

To be chosen by authors, who I hold in esteem, is awesome, as I truly value their opinion. Having worked with them as a reviewer, I know how professionally they execute their craft, and understand what it takes to produce a high-class piece of work.

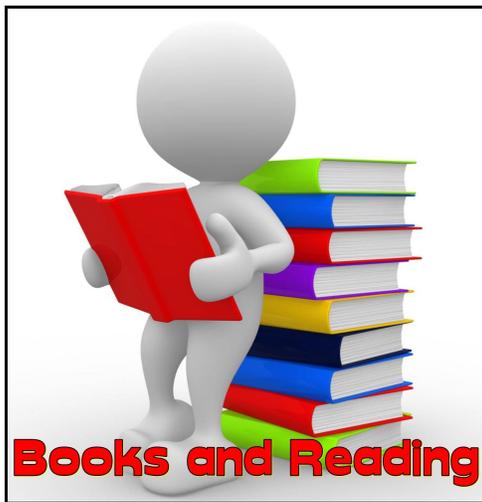
To be frank, I was quite nervous about publishing my stories. I'd never ventured into the self-publishing world before, and was unsure how readers would react to my somewhat offbeat narratives. Then I received a wonderful review by Queen of Spades, the Vice President of AAPP, and felt much better. Better still when more positive reviews followed.

Although sales aren't staggering, I am more than grateful when someone actually buys a copy. Receiving this award has more than made up for the lack of sales. Who knows, perhaps now that I can say I am an Award Winning Author, all thanks to All Authors Publications and Promotions, readers might be prompted to purchase a book that has the stamp of approval from such an excellent and talented group of writers.

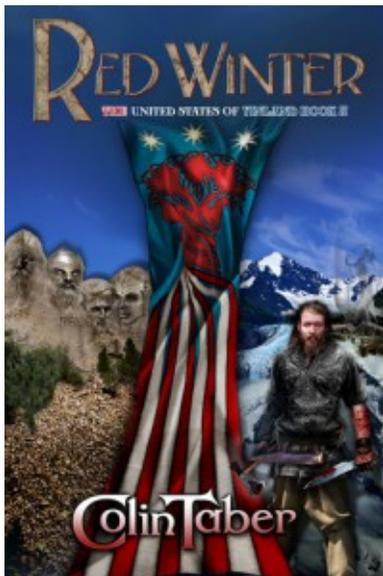
I want to thank All Authors Publications and Promotions for honouring me in this way. It has boosted my confidence, and provided me with the incentive to finish and publish my next collection of short stories.

Cheers Y. Correa and Queen of Spades, you have given a struggling storyteller a reason to smile and stand proud.

Nicola McDonagh



***Let's Celebrate, Let's Read
Recommended Reads***



Title: Red Winter (The United States of Vinland 2)

Author: Colin Taber

Genre: Historical Fiction

Available: Amazon.com

Blurb: Over a thousand years ago the Norse reached the Americas, but never stayed.

What if they had?

Following on from The United States Of Vinland: The Landing comes Red Winter.

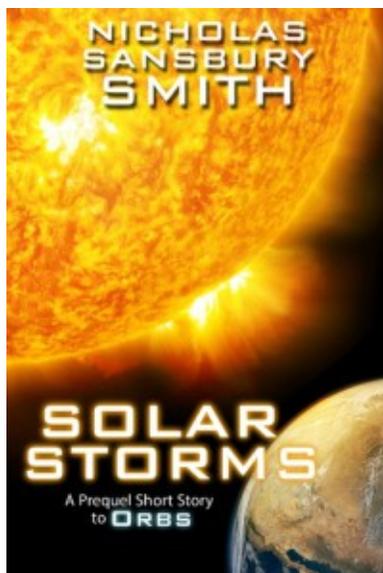
Eskil's dream of settling the newly discovered lands of the west to honour the Gods is under way. Godsland and Lakeland are no longer alone, as new villages grow and prosper in a world of fjords, valleys, forests and mountains, all of it claimed in the name of Odin.

For over twenty years factional rivalries have remained, but the Hall of Wolves and the Hall of Ravens must face a challenge that comes heralded by crying war horns and a horizon stained with smoke.

Can the young settlements survive the challenge?

But this is not the only trial the Norse of Markland will face. Back across the sea in their peoples ancient homelands there are those who are jealous of the prosperity they see in the west.

War is coming to Markland.



Title: Solar Storms, A Prequel Short Story to Orba

Author: Nicholas Sansbury Smith

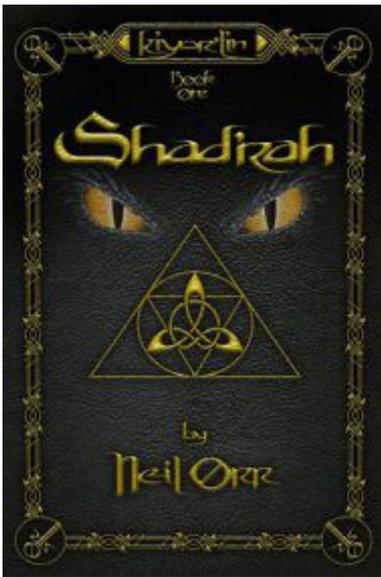
Genre: Science Fiction

Available: Amazon.com

Blurb: In 2055, scientists discover something far worse than rising temperatures and rising seas—they discover massive sunspots that are producing unprecedented solar flares.

With little time to prepare for the storms, NASA recruits Drs. Sophie Winston and Emanuel Rodriguez to help monitor the solar weather. At first, the duo believes they have been hired for a routine project. But when arriving at the Johnson Space Center they quickly realize they haven't been told everything about their mission. And as a massive storm races toward Earth, they begin to suspect that it isn't a natural event. Millions of miles away something is feeding the storms...

"Solar Storms" is a prequel short story to the terrifying sci-fi thriller, ORBS.



Title: Shad'Rah
Author: Neil Orr
Genre: Fantasy Fiction
Available: Amazon.com

Blurb: Welcome to Kiyor'lin, a land where magic is prevalent. It is a realm of many cultures where Elves are the current ruling race. They are allied with Dwarves and the Humans. The ogres to the north and the Trolls to the south are bound by a treaty that is tenuous, at best. However, the real threat comes in the form of an evil witch that serves the dark dragon god. Using hired assassins and an army of demons, Nymette is determined to bring chaos and destruction to the land.

The young Elfin king is chosen by the dragon god of the light to put a stop to the witch and her army. After handpicking his command party, Draganos sets out with a regiment of his finest warriors. Along the way, they must avoid the assassins that are hired to put an end to him. They will face demons of all kinds, including the ones hidden within themselves. They will learn new things about one another. In the strangest moment, Draganos realizes his queen. But, in order to survive long enough to wed his love, he must first learn the ancient truth.



Title: Lunar Rampage
Author: Samantha Cross
Genre: Paranormal Fiction
Available: Amazon.com

Blurb: Photographer, animal lover, and unfortunately for the summer, the new girl in town, Cora Nash considers herself a simple girl. Renovating and living at her grandmother's house seemed like a good idea, until events took a turn for the bizarre. Garbage cans viciously torn into, howls from the woods, wild animals behaving erratically, and an ominous warning from the good looking bad boy, "Stay out the forest."

This seemingly normal town hides a mysterious and violent secret. When one of the townsfolk up and disappears in the forest, leaving nothing but a pair of shoes, Cora is the only person willing to investigate. The answer, however, is nothing she could have ever anticipated, when under a full moon she finds herself face to face with a... werewolf.

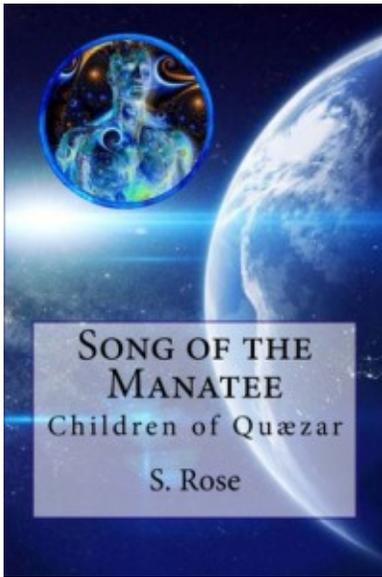
If werewolves don't exist, where did it come from? And... more importantly, who could it be?



Title: How to Navigate a Zombie Cave and Defeat Pirate Pete
Author: Mick Bogerman
Genre: Children's Adventure
Available: Amazon.com

Blurb: Armed with a pitchfork, miner's hat, and map, Mick Bogerman dares to hunt for pirate treasure in Zombie Cave. His little brother Finley is tied up at the beach. Literally--Mick tied him up. No one needs a little brother tagging along when you're going to slay the undead.

But Mick soon wishes he'd taken some human company with him, because lurking in every corner, reaching from every crevice, is another hungry corpse. No wonder the place is named Zombie Cave! And finding treasure in the twisty tunnels is a lot harder when your map disintegrates. And man-oh-man the cold, dark tide chases fast. But the worst part about fighting off ravenous flesh-eaters is the one monster deadlier than a regular zombie . . . the worst of the worst . . . Pirate Pete.



Title: Children of Quæzar (Song of the Manatee, Book 2)

Author: S. Rose

Genre: Futuristic Science Fiction

Available: Amazon.com

Blurb: Song of the Manatee: Children of Quæzar is book two, concluding the story begun in Song of the Manatee: Aria of Light. What exactly happened to cave-diving paleontologist Michael Black, and how did he wind up on a planet in a faraway galaxy? Who were the mysterious Olowa Naholo, and why did General McLaughlin have them slaughtered? How did Swan travel through time, and why could she read the thoughts of others? What happened to our dear friend Moon? And just who was driving that flying saucer?!! All will be illuminated as our friends from book one meet up with some highly interesting aliens. There are surprising twists and turns before they embark at last upon the ultimate journey.



What NOT to Read

Hello all!

Today, I bring you part 2 of a three part What NOT to Read segment. Last Issue I brought you “The Tower’s Alchemist” by Alesha Escobar. This Issue, I am introducing you to “Dark Rift” from the same series.



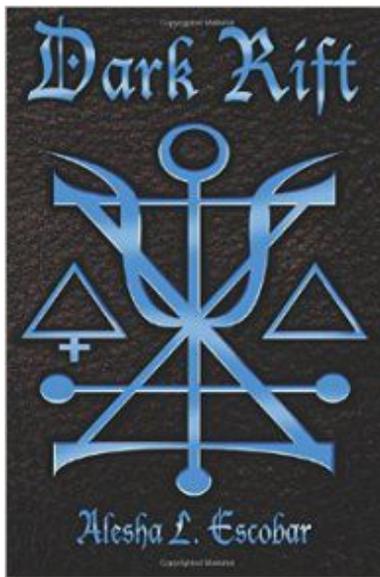
As most of you know I work hand in hand with The Review Board reviewing books by authors from all walks of life. Now, being part of this organization requires me to look at books even when I don’t want to.

This book in particular was one of them.

After having read the first book in the series I really wasn’t in the mood to look at this one. However, it wasn’t up to me. It was my duty to read it, so I did.



Here is the blurb and such.



Dark Rift: The Grey Tower Trilogy Book Two

Blurb:

Savior.

Monster.

A Time Wizard who will be the damnation of many...

The world already suffers a bitter taste of hell on earth, in a World War II where Nazi warlock vampires battle with Gray Tower wizards in the streets of Europe and in the shadows.

The Gray Tower, in its quest to stabilize a world that hangs on a delicate balance, has issued an order: Kill the Drifter.

Isabella George, an alchemist trained by the Tower, knows the identity of the Drifter and refuses to go through with it, because it hits too close to home. Instead of executing the Drifter, she protects the Time Wizard at all costs and ensures that the power to control Time never falls into the wrong hands.

She sets out to lift the severe decree of the Gray Tower, and prove to the Master Wizards that the Drifter is the only way to win the war. As Isabella unmasks traitors and embraces unlikely allies, her greatest danger may lie in her own heart—from the brutal desire for revenge, to the crushing guilt she carries...and the dangerous passion she tries to deny when she's with one man in particular.

As she attempts to sort things out both in her heart and head—and not mix up the two, a figure from her past comes along and makes an enticing offer to solve all her problems. The only payment required is her soul.

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Where can I start with this book?

I find myself in one of those situations where you want to say so much, but almost don't have the strength—more so, the desire—to.

I suppose I'll start by giving a bit about the premise. However, I've made up my mind that this review will be short and to the point. Now, while I've made up my mind, I can't promise you that it will, because once I get into the swing of things I tend to get long-winded.

It'll go something like this: explain the plot a tad then give my overall thoughts.

Today I've opted to veer away from my typical 'Pros and Cons' bullets, as I feel like they won't really be necessary. Mostly because a lot of my thoughts on this book are the same as my thoughts on the 1st in the series, with maybe one or two differences.

I'll start by asking; have you ever read a series and thought to yourself "This one isn't much better than the first, albeit for a couple of different reasons."?

Basically it's the thought of "What the first one lacked this one was a bit better on, but what the first one was better on this one lacked."

More specifically, it's the feeling of being let down.

Does that even make sense? I really hope it does.

Let me dig into the meat of this review for you as I feel like going off on a tangent. I want to keep this as short and to the point as I possibly can.

“Dark Rift” is the continuation of “The Tower’s Alchemist” and instead of continuing where the last one let off, as presumed, it actually does not. It starts off some time later—not much, but certainly not where the last one left off.

The reason I even bring up that point is because the first book was somewhat of a cliffhanger. So, when picking up the second book, you’re under the assumption that it would and should start there. This one obviously doesn’t.

Here Isabella George deems it necessary to sort things out by presenting the Master Wizard with the proof that the Drifter is humanity’s only salvation during this time of war and havoc.

Wizards, and Warlocks, and Magic, OH MY!

I know what you’re thinking, and to answer that question, nope! This is definitely no Harry Potter type of story. Not even close.

Isabella is also dealing with the ramifications of the losses she’d accumulated during “The Tower’s Alchemist” and finds it difficult to cope with them. In this story we see the return of a few of the characters in the first book as well as the presentation of new ones.

I find that the best way to describe the overall scheme of “Dark Rift” is to say that it’s a magical (or so we hope) journey of personal discovery.

As with the first story in this series, I had some major problems with this read that really killed my gross enjoyment of it. To be completely honest, I didn’t enjoy it at all. I was flat out bored out of my mind.

Alright... I changed my mind.

I did say that I wasn’t promising anything.

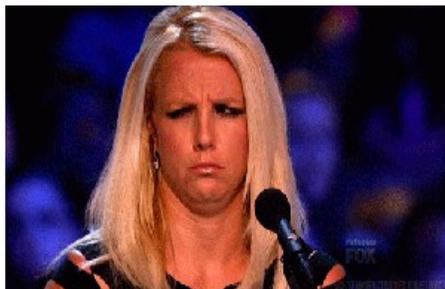
I suppose I WILL be doing some bullet points after all, but not in the form of Pros and Cons, just general bullet points.

1. Dark Rift is a story that is unfortunately too “preachy” for me. What do I mean? I mean that the book continually went into long segments of unnecessary information, all being told from a first person perspective which many times seemed very presumptuous.

2. I still didn’t like the main character. She is just really not very likable at all, unfortunately.

3. All of the “magical” elements of this story seemed like an after thought or just all out displaced—as if it just didn’t belong or wasn’t at all necessary.

I was left like this ...



4. While in “Dark Rift” there wasn’t as many characters introduced, the ones that were introduced weren’t all that interesting, and for the most part had blasé personalities. It was like, “Well, hello Joe Schmoe, who the hell are you anyway and why are you here? God, you’re boring the hell out of me!”

5. I continually felt like the conflict wasn't believable and lacked stimuli.

6. There were constant bouts of the author trying to plug in the magical/mythological explanations in awkward places. It was like the story's progression would be halted so that the author could implement some miscellaneous magic lesson.

7. I can't help but keep saying to myself, "One of these elements just isn't needed. This should be either a magic story, or a war story, or a spy story and not all. They just don't seem to mesh well. In wanting to have all of these aspects in the story, it seems as though they aren't being told to their fullest capacity—so one takes away from the other, and in turn it is an all out put off."

8. The writing style is still a bit odd, but better than the last book. The syntax can still use a tad bit of work, but isn't horrible.

9. I think that the story would've benefited from the exclusion or shaving of some excess scenes to help with the boredom aspect. What good is a fiction book when it's not entertaining? I mean, am I wrong in thinking that a story should be engaging? If I wanted to be bored out of my mind, I would've picked up a Social Studies Text Book. No, but seriously though, why are books classified as "entertainment" in the first place if they weren't meant to ... well ... entertain! I'm just saying.

10. There was still the aspect of the unresolved issues in book 1, that weren't resolved in book 2 either. Oh, but wait, there is more! Book 2 added more unresolved issues. So we have a two-fold amount of unanswered affairs. Thanks for that! *insert sarcastic voice here* I'll let you know in the next issue of AAM if book 3 did it's job and gave us ultimate resolution.



Due to holding the expectation that this one would rank higher on my Reading Richter Scale—as it was the 2nd in the collection—but didn't, I found myself feeling highly unimpressed with "Dark Rift" and thus causing my ranking to mark even lower this time around.

My verdict?

2 Stars.



That's all for today. Stay tuned for the next issue of All Authors Magazine for the 3rd installation in this review trilogy.

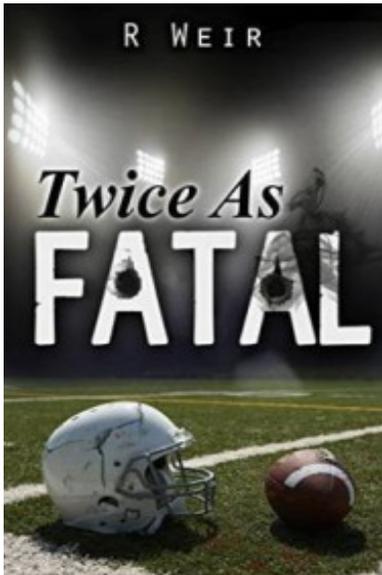
Until next time!

Mini Truth



Hot Off The Presses

Issue 11: *Vision Degrees Celsius*
This Just Out (Hot Off the Presses)



Title: Twice as Fatal: A Jarvis Mann Detective Novel

Author: R. Weir

Genre: Suspense

Release Date: May 29th, 2015

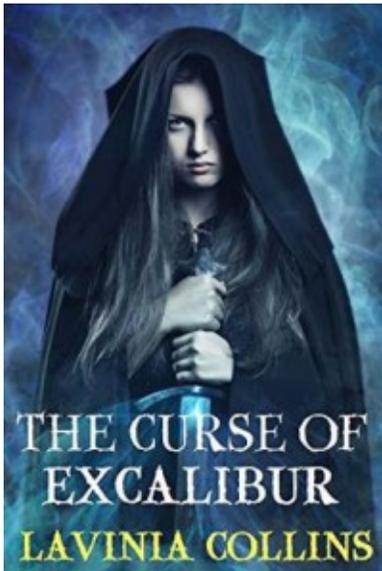
Available at: Amazon.com

Blurb: Twice the business, twice the danger and Twice as Fatal. PI Jarvis Mann has two cases he is working, making his professional and personal life twice as difficult.

Ray Malone is a promising college football star whose career is derailed by injuries. When he disappears, close friend Jarvis is recruited by Ray's father to locate him. After tracking him down a video is sent of Ray with the warning of it going public, threatening his career and those that love him.

Case two has landlord Kate Tanner hiring Jarvis to gather evidence against her cheating, thieving husband so she can divorce him. As Jarvis investigates he learns of the husband's connection to a powerful man, with a dangerously perverted agenda that crosses into Kate's life with deadly consequences.

Across the Rocky Mountain Front Range Jarvis tries to balance both cases, each dragging him deeper into different sleazy underworlds, jeopardizing him, his clients and their families. With danger and death all around him, he somehow must rescue everyone before this fatal business claims the lives of all involved, his life and the one he is growing to love.



Title: The Curse of Excalibur

Author: Lavinia Collins

Genre: Medieval Fantasy

Release Date: June 1st, 2015

Available at: Amazon.com

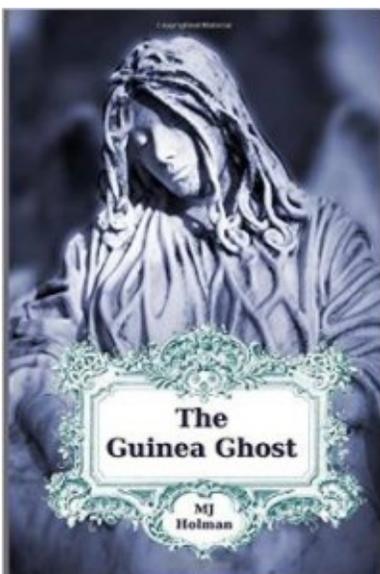
Blurb: Completely abandoned by everyone she trusted and sold into marriage with the vile Uriens to please her brother, King Arthur, Morgan sits alone in Rheged Castle.

A burning desire for revenge on everyone grows inside her.

Most of all, however, she hates Arthur. So when he unwittingly asks her to look after his sword Excalibur, she senses an opportunity.

But Morgan will have to overcome the trickery of Merlin, and summon all of her otherworldly powers to return to Camelot and vanquish her enemies.

THE CURSE OF EXCALIBUR is the second book of THE MORGAN TRILOGY. It can be enjoyed on its own or read after the first book, THE WITCHES OF AVALON.



Title: The Guinea Ghost: Expanded Edition

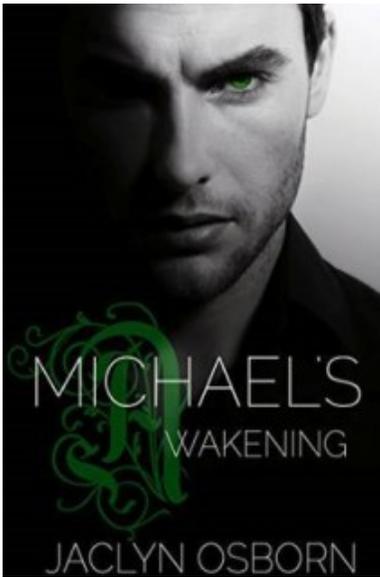
Author: MJ Holman

Genre: Historical Fiction

Release Date: June 4th, 2015

Available: Amazon.com

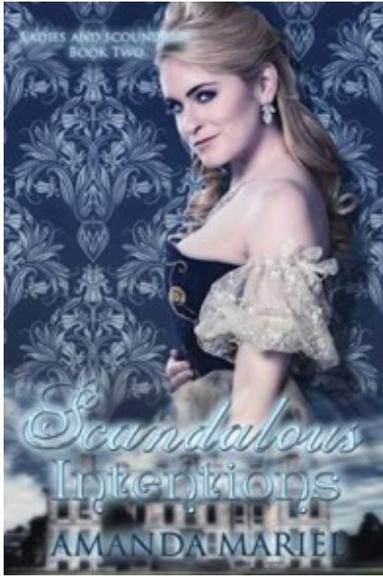
Blurb: The Guinea Ghost is a novella set in the 18th century and tells the story of a family plagued by memories of ghosts from the present and the past. The disappearance and haunting by servant girl Molly triggers traumatic memories for Phoebe and her family, propelling her on a quest to find out the truth about her mother's violent past and taking her from the hills of Yorkshire to the wilderness of Canada. This is a story of bitter memories, sexual repression and how cruelty knows no limits when spurred by jealousy and the taints of past actions.



Title: Michael's Awakening
Author: Jaclyn Osborn
Genre: Gay Romance
Release Date: June 16th, 2015
Available on: Amazon.com

Abbreviated Blurb: One moment...that's all it takes for life as you once knew it to change irrevocably. For Michael Kingston, that moment was when he first laid eyes on Gabriel. In his life, Michael had only known darkness, leaving behind a broken shell of a man. Unspeakable memories of his childhood constantly plagued him, causing him to disconnect emotionally from the world. No one had ever shown him love; therefore, he believed that he was unworthy of it. And then everything changed.

Gabriel Greyson had always been different. Growing up in a small, Bible-thumping town, his preferences for men, makeup, and fashion made him an outcast. But, with the support and love of his family, he overcame obstacles that were thrown his way and rose above the intolerance. He danced to the beat of his own glammed-out drum and refused to believe that he was anything other than ultra-fabulous. Working as a beautician, he had a job he adored and felt that everything was perfect in his life. Everything except for true love.

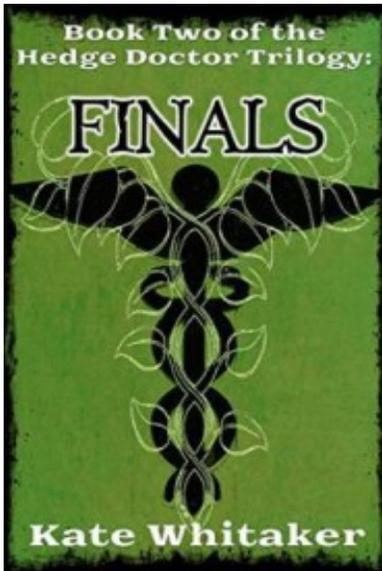


Title: Scandalous Intentions
Author: Amanda Mariel
Genre: Historical Romance
Release Date: June 18th, 2015
Available: Amazon.com

Blurb: When faced with losing his inheritance, notorious rake Lord Julian Luvington sets his sights on Lady Sara. She's as respectable as they come, just what his father ordered. But the lady shan't be easily won.

She's determined to marry for love or not at all, and she'll do anything to obtain the freedom granted to men. A blackguard like Lord Luvington could destroy her hard-won reputation, but marriage to him also offers her the opportunities she can't achieve on her own. What's a lady to do?

When Lord Luvington refuses to abandon his pursuit, Lady Sara proposes an arrangement. Only the price may be more than either bargained for. Lady Sara could lose more than her social standing and Julian could lose his heart.



Title: Finals (Hedge Doctor Book 2)
Author: Kate Whitaker
Genre: Paranormal Horror
Release Date: July 1st, 2015
Available at: Amazon.com

Blurb: Jeff Hanson never expected that balancing high school with being a hedge doctor would be easy. And that was before the poltergeist took up residence in the basement.

Now Jeff doesn't just have to worry about monster hunters turning up for stitches during study hall. He, his cousin, and Nicole, the witch they discovered, have to keep the school safe from zombies and whatever else the poltergeist might throw at them.

Just to add to the stress, there's something up with Nicole's foster mother. But finding out what that is might destroy Jeff's chances of dating Nicole.



Review Rendezvous

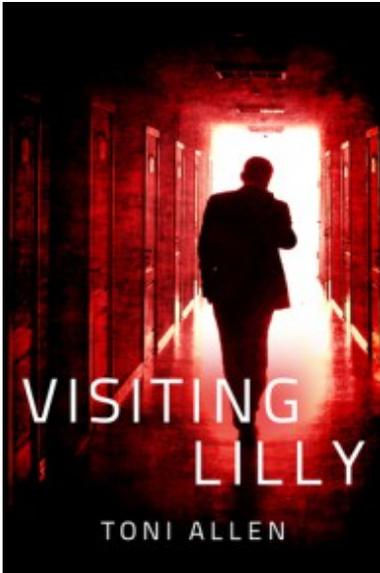
In this issue, Mini Truth is the guest reviewer on Review Rendezvous, which will make its final appearance in All Authors Magazine

Disclaimer: Due to space limitations, most of these reviews have been abbreviated. For those which have been abbreviated, a link will be provided to the full review.

Visiting Lilly by Toni Allen

Genre: Mystery/Paranormal

Available: Amazon



Blurb: Why should a man at a Surrey police station go ballistic because someone tries to visit Lilly, his elderly grandmother?

Detective Inspector Jake Talbot is intrigued, and this little puzzle might serve to distract him from sorrows of a Christmas past. Soon he is entangled with Frankie, an odd young man who claims to have met Lilly in her youth. Talbot dismisses the notion of time travel, but then discovers the Ministry of Defence has been monitoring Frankie since his friend disappeared ten years previously. Forced to work with the MOD, Talbot unearths family secrets and betrayals. The families act ruthlessly to prevent him from discovering the facts, colluding to ruin him.

If Frankie is innocent, Talbot won't let him be victimised. An uneasy understanding grows between them as they follow the evidence, for only the truth will allow Frankie to visit Lilly.

Abbreviated Review (for Full Review, visit Goodreads): Visiting Lilly is the story of Detective Inspector Jake Talbot and Francis "Frankie" Hayward—a man that claims he's traveled through time, but more than that, during his time travel he met and fell in love with a woman by the name of Lilly.

The dilemma is that in current time, whenever Frankie attempts to visit Lilly who is an elderly woman in an Old Folks Home, her grandson goes insane, accusing Frankie of being a pervert.

Things eventually get super interesting when D.I. Talbot decides that he wants to know more about this case and what is really going on. While Talbot is battling with his own inner demons, he can't seem to lose interest in the goings on of this case.

I'll try not to ruin the story too much for you all—I don't want to give any spoilers.

So I will give you my thoughts of the overall presentation of this story in the form of Pros and Cons.

Cons:

There aren't any!

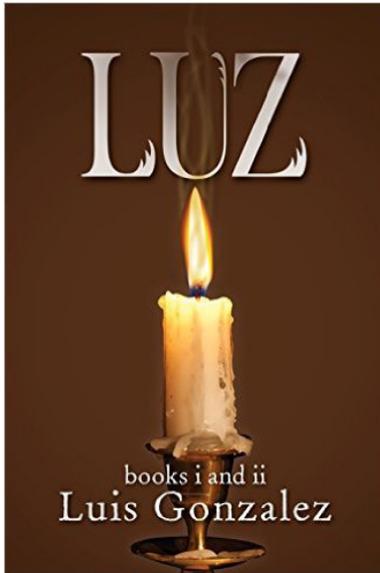
I can't even begin to tell you how wonderful it is to read a book and say with all certainty that there are NO CONS WHATSOEVER. It's a beautiful thing indeed!

Pros:

1. The story has a certain edge of the genres Hard-boiled and Noir Fiction. When reading it, I felt as though I was being taken to the time of Dick Tracy, with a modern twist.
2. All of the characters were extraordinarily written and highly believable.
3. The dialogue was believable. Never cliché, never questionable.

4. The chapters were of even-ish length, not too long, and divided in all the right places.
5. The story keeps the reader invested. There isn't a moment when you think to yourself, "Hmm. I'm not that interested in what's going on next." As the matter of fact, it's quite the opposite. You WANT to know.
6. Being that I am a Special Needs parent, I ALWAYS ADMIRE when a story interweave the reality of struggling with Special Needs in a way that truly bring that struggle to the forefront. Visiting Lilly does that marvelously. More than that, it give the readers a real look into the life of a Special Needs person.

All in all, Visiting Lilly is a phenomenal read and I recommend it highly.



Luz by Luis Gonzalez
Genre: Christian Fantasy
Available: Amazon

Blurb: Heaven, August of 1994, where a divine plot is currently hatching. The Creator of the Universe, anxious that his Son's second coming should have already taken place by now—for according to scripture it was supposed to occur no later than 1988 but still seems nowhere on the horizon—is tired of waiting for the Son of Man to take action and fulfill his prophecy. Cuba, August of 1994, where a shocking event is currently unfolding. For the first time in 35 years, Cubans are openly revolting against Castro's regime and, furthermore, the government is not stopping anyone from leaving the island. Those who want to flee are free to do so, as long as they take to the sea in their inner tubes and contraptions and homemade rafts. Clara, an idealistic and feisty 19 year-old Cuban girl, has decided that, despite the risks involved, she's leaving her homeland and convinces husband,

Rigo, that they must both join the exodus. It seems all systems are go. Everything is set for the following morning. But that night, as Rigo is breaking the news to his family about their impending departure, another shocking event is about to unfold. As Clara awaits her husband's return, an unexpected visitor appears with news that will drastically impact their plans. Stunned and in disbelief, Clara refuses to accept what is being revealed. She figures that the surreal visitation is only the result of fear and uncertainty over the decision to leave Cuba. But Clara will soon change her mind. She will soon accept the news this stranger brings and thus begin an odyssey that will forever alter her life, in these, the first two testaments of her story.

Abbreviated Review (For full review, visit Goodreads): Before I get into the mass of my review, I have to say one very important thing: Luz is a fantastic story, which could have been made better by just a few adjustments. And even with that, it is still a fabulous read.

Following I am going to give a quick break down of my thoughts in the form of pros and cons, and later sum it up with my final thoughts/conclusions.

Let's start with the cons as there are not many:

I felt as a whole, the chapters were too long. On the average, chapters ranged at about 30 pages in length, on full sized pages. Possibly, rethinking the chapter length would have been a good step.

While VERY FEW, and very far between, I did spot some typos. But, that's exactly what they were; typos. You see there wasn't anything wrong with syntax per say. It was just little errors here and there.

There were some intervals of repetitious phrases. It was as if the author did not particularly know how else to phrase something, so whatever was repeated was his mental default. THIS, I promise you did not deter from the enjoyment of the story.

Now, the following is very much a personal preference. The story is a very big cliff hanger. Now, I do realize that it's only one book (the first book) in a series, but I think that any book—even in a series—can have a certain degree of closure by its end.

While the story is about Luz, Father God's soon to be daughter, the focus was mostly on Clara and her venture—from trying to obtain freedom, to realizing she is going to be the mother of God's next child, and the enterprise therein.

So, that's it with the cons.

On to the pros.

I have got to give Mr. Gonzalez total and complete props on his breathtaking use of words. I am the first to say that he is a definite sui generis when it comes to his application of diction. He has a certain eloquence that takes the reader to another place altogether. It's spellbinding, to say the least.

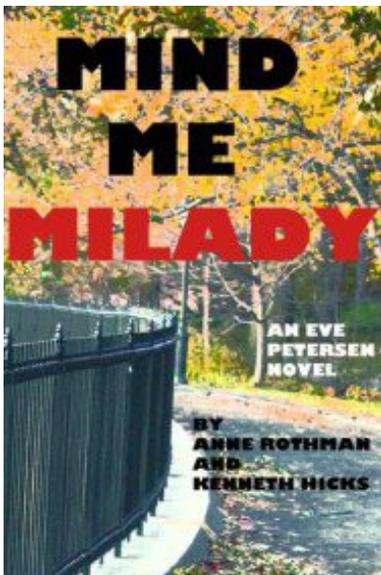
The story takes unexpected twists and turns that keeps the reader invested. This is something that I truly appreciate in a work.

There were some, for a lack of a better description, comical bits, where the author portrays God the Father and God the Son in such a humanistic way that the reader can connect with them. They are not illustrated as the transcendent and abstruse beings that most make them out to be. It's a refreshing take on the usual approach.

The characters were fantastically rendered and were believable as a whole.

The scene descriptions and the like were depicted in such a way that not only did the image become clear, but the reader felt as though they were there. The author did an amazing job of chronicling everything so well—the scents, the sounds, the ambiance. Just enormously well written.

Overall, I find that Luz is a book well worth reading for not just the faith driven reader, but for the fiction and fantasy seeker. Mr. Gonzalez is an amazingly talented writer, and his talent makes me proud to be a Latino-Caribbean female. I truly believe that with a tad bit of tweaking, Luz will be a New York Times best seller in no time.



Mind Me, Milady by Anne Rothman-Hicks and Kenneth Hicks

Genre: Mystery

Available: Amazon

Abbreviated Blurb (For Full Blurb, visit Amazon): Every time the phone rings, Eve Anderson fears that the Gentleman Rapist will taunt her with the plight of a new victim awaiting rescue. Eve must listen as he recounts details in his phony British accent and promises that one day he will choose her.

Eve is an attorney, not a cop, but the serial rapist terrorizing women on New York's Upper East Side is obsessed with her. She is a determined, strong woman. But she has enough to deal with in her personal and professional life. She does not have the time or experience to solve a mystery in New York.

Now the Gentleman Rapist has escalated to murder. Now he stalks Eve's latest client, a sweet innocent girl with amnesia. Is this monster a part of the girl's mysterious past? Or did Eve herself endanger her client by handing him a target for revenge?

Now Eve must catch the Gentleman Rapist and stop his deadly game before yet another woman feels a wire tighten around her throat, and hears him whisper, "Mind me, Milady. Mind your master."

Abbreviated Review (for Full Review, visit Goodreads): I have a whole slew of thoughts as it pertains to this read. But before I dip into them, I just want to say something that's very important.

This is a very good story with the potential to be great. Yet, I find myself on the fence, and throughout this review you will see why. I am going to try my best to convey my thoughts in a clear and concise manner, that will (I hope) not confuse you.

I am of several different minds when it comes to this book. They are:

The mind of a reader
The mind of a writer
The mind of a reviewer
The mind of an advocate
The mind of an editor

Whilst I was reading this book many things went through my mind.

Things like:

~ Wow. This is actually a fantastic story line.

~ It's obviously written as a collaboration—as I could tell from chapter to chapter that it was different authors writing. Their styles were different.

~ If only the technical bits could measure up to the premise.

So, in all of that, what kept me on the fence was the fact that the presentation diminished the potential in the book as the story by itself is fantastic.

This book interweaves so many intriguing elements. You've got mystery, crime, thrill, as well as tidbits of paranormal elements, although it's not obvious to the untrained eye. These are expressed during Susan's dreams for the most part.

Suffice it to say that I loved the story line. Yet, the editorial bits made me angry, because had the authors taken a little more care and done a more attentive job of editing the book it would have been a definite 5 star read for me.

Now, here is where it gets tricky.

I need to start with my thoughts on a collaborative work.

Here is the definition: Collaborative writing refers to two or more persons working together to produce a written document.

When a work is collaborative it's imperative that the story flow coherently—smoothly. Basically, the reader shouldn't be able to tell who was Author A and who was Author B, but read the story as if it were one person.

Even before looking at the blurb and author(s) of this book, I KNEW it was 2 different people.

While it's not practiced widely in the writing world, I sometimes dip into a book without looking at who wrote it or the blurb. THIS was one of those occasions.

Yet, I'd gotten about 6 chapters in and knew that it was written by 2 different people, and I'll tell you why ...

Let's refer to the authors as Author A and Author B.

Author A had a practically flawless delivery in his/her prose, whereas Author B, not so much.

Now, in the book as a whole—both on the sides of Author A and B—there were some punctuation mishaps. Like a quotation mark inside of a quotation mark.

There were also some instances of missing punctuation or improperly used punctuation and things of the sort.

Overall, I think that Mind Me Milady is a great story that needs plenty of polishing, once that is done I would openly recommend it to anyone that likes this genre.





My Anniversary by Cora West

Genre: Erotica, Short Stories

Available: Amazon

Blurb: Victoria is celebrating her tenth wedding anniversary in Maui when her husband proposes they explore their hidden fantasies. She's shocked when he tells her he wants to see her with another man. She admits that she sometimes fantasizes about being an exhibitionist. Add in one sexy, skimpy white dress and a few Mai Tais, and who knows what will happen...

My Anniversary is a standalone story in the My Hot Vacation series, which features women traveling to steamy locales. These exciting getaways bring surprises, new experiences, and unexpected awakenings. Take a quick break with these short, fun, super-sexy reads.

This erotic short is approximately 6,400 words long, 22 print pages. It contains content suitable only for adults.

Abbreviated Review (For Full Review, visit Goodreads): "My Anniversary" by Cora West is a short story of about 22 pages in length (give or take a few pages depending on what format you're reading it in). The short story is written in first person, present tense, via the view of the main character, Victoria. It's a very quick read that can be read in about a half hour.

I really don't have anything good to say about this story. I truly mean no disrespect, but I'm just being honest.

While this is supposed to be Erotica Work, it was more like a 12 year old boy's wet dream.

I don't mean to be vulgar, but am trying to state the obvious. When a person turns to Erotica, the focus is to become sexually aroused.

One phrase I like to use when referring to good Erotica is, "a panty wetter". Is the story a panty wetter, or not?

Simply put, this one is not.

Allow me to share some of my reasons why this book was not as arousing as it could have been as well as some other things, apart from the story line that made this read, not so good.

On with the Pros and Cons:

This book did have a few Pros.

- 1) The Cover wasn't half bad, albeit stereotypical.
- 2) The plot has potential.
- 3) The spelling is good, even though the grammar is not completely correct.
- 4) The premise can be considered "real life" or "based on real events".

Unfortunately, the Cons outweigh the Pros.

- 1) The story starts off with a series of cut off scenes that don't do much to add to the story line, yet mostly leave the reader confused as they are incomplete.
- 2) The main character's name is only mentioned once, throughout the entire story. Which works against the story as a whole, because by the end of the book I'd forgotten her name and had to go back and look it up.
- 3) The writing style is very unemotional and mollified. It just doesn't do anything to pull the reader in and keep him/her invested in the story.
- 4) In regards to grammar, it could have been better. This writer seems to have a thing for ellipses. However, this seems to be the new norm among the writing community. The "new fad" is throwing ellipses just any old where. My view? When in doubt, Google it. If you're not sure how to use a punctuation, Google it. Easy peasy.

5) I didn't care much about the main character. She just seemed boring to tell you the truth. The husband came off as a pervert, as did Julian. Yet, all of this can easily be contributed to the writing style. When the writing is mediocre, the characters are unlovable.

6) Another downfall was the while the book was supposedly written in present tense, it kept shifting back and forth between present and past tense. This made the writing inconsistent.

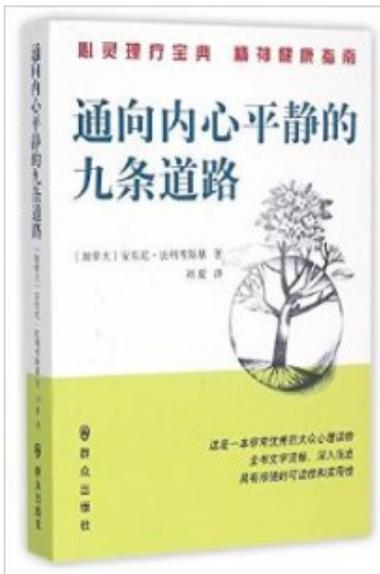
7) There was also NOTHING original about this story. This story was the epitome of the same old drab "fantasy" story. Wife and husband are bored with each other, they go on a vacation, and the fantasy comes true. Just SOOOO unoriginal that it drives me crazy.

I say that to say this; if you're looking for a short story that will truly "wet your panties" this is not it. Sorry. I just can't do blasé Erotica.



International Corner

Issue 11: Vision Degrees Celsius



Title: 9 Ways Leading to Inner Peace (Chinese Edition)

Author: Anonymous

Genre: Self-Help

Language: Chinese

Available: Amazon

Blurb:

In combination with the ancient wisdom, philosophical traditions and the research findings of modern psychology, this book proposes a set of feasible self-extracting methods that are created by the author. It aims to help us alleviate inner stress and mental confusion and obtain inner peace. Divided into 44 chapters, this book details the reasons behind mental confusion and inner pressure, the basic types of personality and corresponding decompression methods.



Title: Hjältars Väg: Första Boken Av Trollkarlens Ring (Heroes' Road: First Book Of The Sorcerer's Ring)

Author: Morgan Rice

Genre: Fantasy

Language: Swedish

Available: Amazon

Abbreviated Blurb:

En ny, fantastisk fantasyserie från bästsäljarförfattaren Morgan Rice! HJÄLTARS VÄG (första delen av TROLLKARLENS RING) är den storslagna berättelsen om en alldeles särskild pojke, en fjortonåring från en liten by i utkanten av Ringens kungarike. Yngst av fyra syskon, minst omtyckt av sin far och avskydd av sina tre bröder har Thorgrin en känsla av att han är annorlunda. Han drömmer om att en dag bli en stor krigare, om att bli en av kungens män och skydda Ringen från de vilda horder av fiender som lever på den andra sidan Klyftan. När han väl har åldern inne, men förbjuds av sin far att ens försöka bli uttagen till kungens legion så vägrar han att ge upp: han ger sig av på egen hand, fast besluten att ta sig till Kungsgård för att bli tagen på allvar.



Title: Krimis für den Urlaub: Sieben Romane in einem Buch (Cops For Vacation: Seven Novels in One Book)

Author: Alfred Bekker

Genre: Suspense

Language: German

Available: Amazon

Blurb:

Sieben Romane in einem Buch - 1192 Seiten Cassiopeiapress Thriller Spannung. Sieben Kriminalromane der Sonderklasse - hart, actionreich und überraschend in der Auflösung. Ermittler auf den Spuren skrupelloser Verbrecher. Sieben spannende Romane in einem Buch: Ideal als Urlaubslektüre.

Mal provinziell, mal urban. Mal lokal-deutsch, mal amerikanisch. Und immer anders, als man zuerst denkt.

ALFRED BEKKER ist ein Schriftsteller, der vor allem durch seine Fantasy-Romane und Jugendbücher einem großen Publikum bekannt wurde. Daneben schrieb er Krimis und historische Romane und war Mitautor zahlreicher Spannungsserien wie Ren Dhark, Jerry Cotton, Cotton Reloaded, John Sinclair und Kommissar X.



Title: La Distanza (The Distance)

Author: Colapesce & Alessandro Baronciani

Genre: Comic Book

Language: Italian

Available: Amazon

Blurb:

Il primo libro a fumetti scritto da Colapesce e disegnato dal maestro Alessandro Baronciani è un viaggio in Sicilia fatto di amori interrotti, passioni indecise, appuntamenti mancati e la distanza, che rovina sempre le cose. Una storia allo stesso tempo sospesa e concreta, in cui l'uso magistrale delle parole e la perfetta padronanza della luce trasmettono le emozioni e la sospensione dell'estate siciliana in modo dolce e struggente.



Title: Paareh Haa va Pooreh Haa

Author: Aboli Moezzi

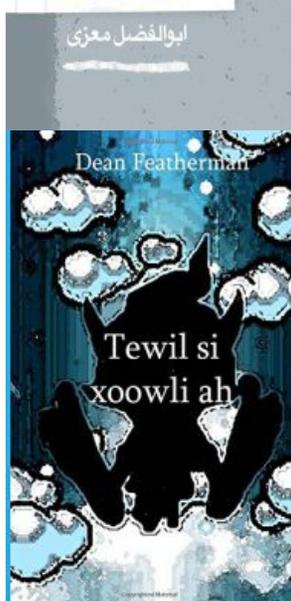
Genre: Poetry

Language: Farsi

Available: Amazon

Blurb:

Selected poems of author and poet, Aboli Moezzi. A collection of unconditional serenades of diaspora written in Farsi



Title: Tewel Equally

Author: Dean Featherman

Genre: General Fiction

Language: Somali

Available: Amazon

Blurb:

The first part of Tewel equally.





Author Interview

For Issue 11: Vision Degrees Celsius, our Featured Author is Luis Gonzalez.

Luis, thank you for joining us here today at All Authors Magazine. We're very happy to have you. Whenever we pick an author to interview, we try to pick authors whose work we find interesting. Suffice it to say that your work (and the many titles under your belt) have peaked our interest. * giggling *

All Authors Magazine is a magazine created by authors, for authors and our motto is "Advocating all authors, reaching all readers". So, today we are going to pick your brain in the hopes that our readers/followers learn more about the person behind the books.



Luis Gonzalez Can Be Found On:

Twitter @luzthenovel

Facebook

Website: Cubanwriter.com

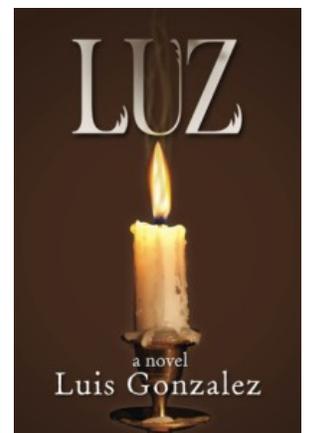
Via: Amazon Author Page

1. How long ago did you come to the US from Cuba? Is it anything like home here?

I came to the US from Cuba in 1968 and it was completely different from the home I had known. I was still a child at the time and I'll never forget my first impressions of the United States. I thought I had stepped into some magical new world, especially the residential areas. Havana is a dense urban city where the buildings are packed in side-by-side and Los Angeles had these quiet suburban streets with picturesque little houses. I would look at them in amazement and wonder what they were like inside.

2. How has "Luz" been received by the general public?

Overall the response has been very positive. I have received good editorial reviews and good reader reviews. If there's been any criticism, it's been about the length of certain portions, which I can see might be a drawback for the contemporary reader. We, as a culture and a society, want and expect everything to be fast and to be done at breakneck speed. We've become an amusement park society where we want our books and our movies to be non-stop thrill roller coaster rides. Well, that's not the way I write, and that's not the way I chose to tell this story. I wrote Luz in the tradition of a 19th century Russian novel where the characters and events develop and unfold at a steady pace and where you really get to know them inside out.



3. As a Latino-American writer, do you feel as though we (the Latino writing community) don't have sufficient support?

Yes, I absolutely feel that, and I feel that it exists within the community itself. We are also falling prey to the “celebrity elements and seductiveness” of the general dominant culture. The Latin American culture has always been one that prides itself on its intellectualism, especially when it comes to the arts and literature. I feel that a lot of what is produced now is done with Hollywood in mind and whether that story is going to translate into a blockbuster movie or not. It’s a real shame because it’s that type of mindset that produces the next generation of art.

4. Given the opportunity to re-do anything in "Luz" what would that be and why?

I would serialize it, which is what I am in the process doing actually. If you notice, everything is serialized these days. and if there is a story that could really benefit from that structure, I think my novel would. By it’s very nature Luz is a long story and, often time, when you see that a book that size some people are drawn to it, but a lot of people are immediately not interested. Fortunately, I have found natural stopping points in the story where I can break it up and serialize into three parts and make it more palatable. I wish I had received that advice from the very beginning. But the beauty of this era of independent publishing and the technology of on-demand publishing is that it makes these types of maneuvers possible and entirely acceptable.

5. Do you have any other books in the works?

Yes, I’m working on a book that also has to do with Cuba. It takes place in the 1980’s and it’s about a group of Cuban Americans that live in the United States. They belong to this underground political organization that sympathizes with Fidel’s Cuba, the Cuba that their parents despise and left behind. I’m very excited about it because as the story comes to life we, as readers, see what really motivates and drives the characters, and it’s often-time something they don’t see or understand at all.

6. What is your favorite part of the storytelling process?

My favorite part of the story telling process is when the characters and the scenes completely take you by surprise, when they develop a life of their own and they turn out to do something completely different from what you had planned. That happened to me with the characters of Clara and her mother, Inez. Throughout Luz, Clara is carrying a secret that she is terrified to share with anyone. Finally, the point comes where she has to confide and the logical person is her mother with whom she’s always had a wonderful relationship. As I devised the story I had always expected the mother to react in a specific and certain way. But during the actual writing of that scene the character of Inez developed a life of its own and reacted completely different from what I had planned. It was this magical experience where I was almost watching the scene rather than writing it. That, to me, is definitely my favorite part.

7. How has your upbringing influenced your writing style (if any)?

My mother came to the United States as a widow, for my father had died in Cuba. I was a single-parent child in the era when it was very socially unacceptable to be one. These days it’s almost fashionable to be a single-parent child. But not in the 60’s and 70’s. It was something that people looked down on you for even though, you, as a child especially, had nothing to do with it. These feelings and attitudes definitely shaped me as a person and me as a writer. My characters are always somewhat off center. They’re never part of the mainstream. They’ve got something to overcome and to prove and it’s generally the larger society or culture as a whole. On a very unconscious level those social norms that I grew up with have influenced my writing and the stories I feel compelled to tell.

8. Did you get any backlash from the religious community in reference to Luz?

Not yet. I don’t think it’s been truly discovered yet by the religious community, but I’m hoping that now when the story gets serialized it will be. In terms of the readership, however, there are those people who, once they discover what the story is really about have a negative reaction, but that’s understandable. I remember that when I got the idea for this story I, myself, was scared by it and scared to undertake it, scared that I, as a writer was being too irreverent or disrespectful.

I had to do a lot of thinking about the situation to realize that this was not the case at all and, if anything, I was infusing a lot of the traditional ideas we have grown up with a new level of admiration and respect.

9. What is one cuisine in the US that reminds you of Cuba?

Flan. The moment I have flan I am in Havana on a hot tropical day, it's late afternoon and the fan is blowing and the sounds from the street are wafting in through the balcony on the second floor.

10. What do you like to do when you're not writing?

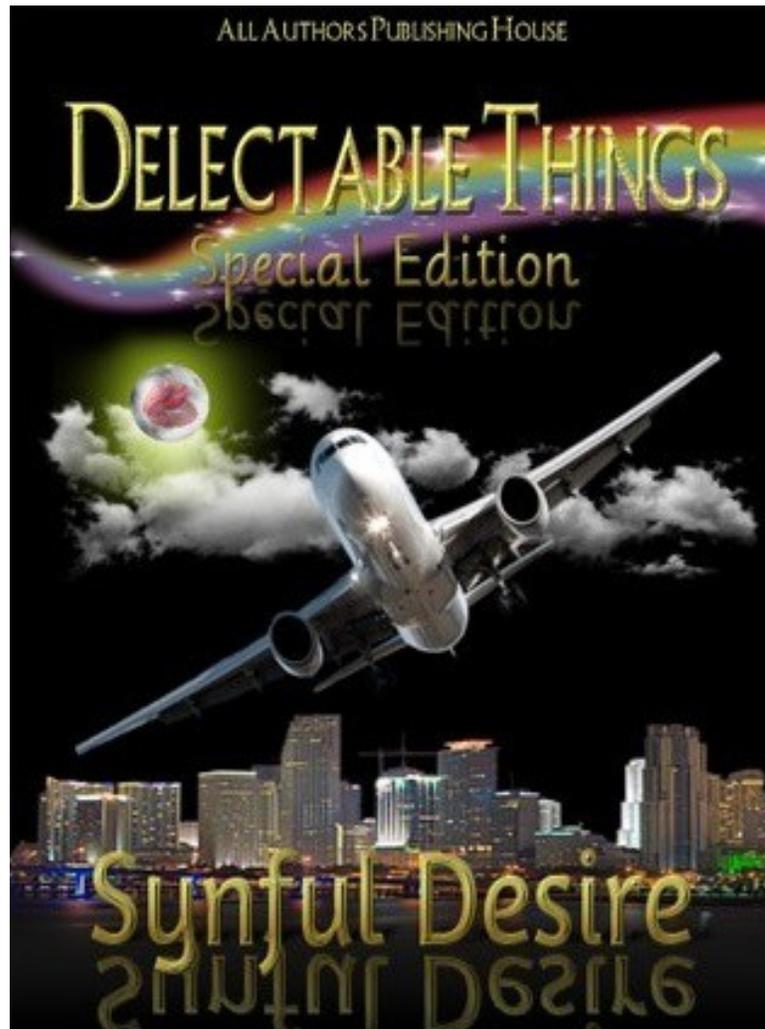
I love nature. I love road trips that take me along the coast or through a redwood forest or along a sunny countryside or even just across the golden gate bridge here in San Francisco. From nature is where I get a lot of my inspiration and my passion to write and create. When I take in some beautiful sweeping vista in a natural surrounding it's like I'm breathing for the first time.

Luis, thanks again for being with us today as the Featured Author of All Authors Magazine, Issue 11.



***Awesome Covers
Issue 11: Vision Degrees Celsius***

For this issue's Awesome Covers, we are proud to feature Delectable Things: Special Edition by Synful Desire.



Genre: LGBTQIA Erotica

Connect with Synful Desire at

Website: [Synful Interludes](#)

Twitter [@synful_desire](#)

Facebook [Author Page](#)

“Delectable Things: Special Edition” is Available: Amazon

1. What is your favorite thing about this cover?

Wow! Where do I begin? I do love the mirror effect of my name at the bottom. Then there are the lips in the moon and the way the plane almost jumps off the page! Color, text and everything all in alignment: just perfect.

2. Given the chance to do an alternate cover for this work, what would you have envisioned/liked?

Well, funny you should say that. Before there was a "Special Edition", there was simply "Delectable Things". The original "Delectable Things" had a different cover. Although I liked that cover, it pales in comparison to the one for Special Edition, which contains two novelettes plus a short story. So, in essence, this cover is the alternate cover to the old cover, if that makes any sense.

3. Do you believe that the general public finds this cover attractive? If so, why? If not, why not?

I think so because it is contemporary, in that it doesn't have any people, but the composition of it appears highly mainstream. Therefore, I think it blends right in.

4. What is your own preference as it pertains to book cover art? Do you prefer to go mainstream, abstracts or a combination of both? Please tell us why.

I am a fan of abstract more so than mainstream. As for the why, it's going to tie into what I have to say about question number five.

5. How do you feel about people that use Stock Images for cover art? Do you find that it takes away from the artistic value? If so, why? If not, why not?

I did talk a little during a roundtable on Da'Kharta Rising's blog a few months ago. It was about certain things authors were doing that I felt shouldn't be trends. Excessively using stock photography on covers is one of them. I touched on it lightly there but if you will permit it, I will expand here.

In the realm of erotica, I still believe in the use of a reader's imagination to determine whether someone is sexy or not, as opposed to some hot muscled guy or buxom female being pimped to the public and deemed as such. In addition, if an author uses a stock photo, that person has to make sure the description in the book matches the photo. I have heard stories of authors having to change the description of the person inside to keep a reader from being able to pick up on the discrepancy, due to using a stock photo that was appealing.

For me, using abstract images takes away from that creative headache because my description to generate to the reader can stay my description. Also, a stock photo doesn't really scream original or art. Shrugs ... whatever floats one's boat.

I just know this: I definitely would not entertain using one on my cover because I value the imagination of the reader than manufacturing a fantasy that all should get behind. People have different images of what is sexy, and you won't be able to please everyone with some girl or guy on the front.

Thanks for the honor!

Coffee Time with Y. Correa

Today on Coffee Time, I am interviewing J. Yates, Author of Garden and many other great books. She and I have something in common ... we are dyslexic.



J, it's so great to connect with you today here on my Coffee Time interview. It's a pleasure talking to another dyslexic author. I'm certain we share lots of commonalities.

As usual, I am going to have my piping hot cup of coffee, what would you like?

Tea, please. :)

You got it. So, J, as a person with dyslexia, did you ever think that you would write a book, let alone have it published?

No! Quick answer.

Longer answer; my mother was a primary school teacher, so she realised when I was quite young that I had a problem. In the 1960's in Britain you were written off and there was not the help or support or understanding there is today. You were labelled as thick and lazy and not helped.

I am badly dyslexic and never used to think of myself as a writer at all. I have always been creative and an artist and it was my art that indirectly led me on the path to becoming a successful writer. In fact, it's all because of my fat spaniel and an incredible editor called Sarah Edwards from a local paper who believed everybody can be a writer that changed my life.

A few years ago, I was drawing a cartoon about my then overweight spaniel, Mandy. My dream was simple and just to get my cartoon published, but I did not have a clue where to start. I emailed my very first cartoon to Sarah, the editor of Ley's News, a community paper in Oxford UK, which is delivered to thousands of homes in the area and reaches an even larger online audience.

Sarah published my cartoon and asked me to write more. I cannot tell you the thrill I got when I first held a copy of the Ley's News with my cartoon and name printed in it. It was such an adrenalin rush and quite addictive. I drew more cartoons, and was delighted to see each of them in print. I sent copies of the paper around the UK to my family and friends and took extra copies and left them in various takeaway shops. Even in launderettes around Oxford City.

One day Sarah told me about a free course in community journalism that she was running and encouraged me to come along. The course was sponsored by Brookes University and was highly structured. Sarah told me that she would be teaching it herself, so I would have a friendly face.

At first I was reluctant to go. I did not want to be a writer. I was happy in my safe made up world drawing my cartoons. I realise now in hindsight that a large part of my reluctance was not only because of my dyslexia, but also because I suffered from low self-esteem. Plus, if I am honest, I was a little scared.

I mean, what if I had to read something out, or worse, written answers down on a board in front of other people who had come on that course to be writers.

I sat at home in real fear. I was transported back to a classroom setting where as a teenager I had read out a passage in front of my classmates. Shakily holding the book, sweating and feeling my skin burn red on my face. Recalling how I had stammered and stumbled with the short passage and had to listen to the laughs and jeers of the class. Worse, return to my seat, the patronising glare of my teacher held fast on my back.

So a course journalism; no, that wasn't something for people like me. By chance, that day I came across a nice quote which goes something like, 'you're not brave in life, unless you're scared.'

Something click inside me. Perhaps, everyone was going to be scared at the course, well at the very least I was sure I was not going to be the only one. Plus, Sarah had told me that she was going to be teaching it. She also said there would be free tea and biscuits to boot!

So, I went to the course partly because Sarah would be there and partly because of free tea and biscuits. Also, partly because I was curious about writing but mostly because I wanted my cartoon to continue being published.

Sarah was an inspirational teacher and the other people on the course were friendly. We got to learn not only about writing for a paper but also about how the paper was laid out and the importance of images.

When the course finished Sarah encouraged everyone who attended to write a short piece for the next edition. So in order to fast forward a bit, I started to write regularly for the Ley's News. Happily Sarah printed just about everything I wrote. I still got to keep going my precious fat spaniel cartoon. Mostly, I wrote about myself, funny stuff like attempting to get fit to run a half marathon. (Calling that column, 'Wonder Woman' was all Sarah's idea,) but I went with the flow.

Things really began to kick off for me when I wrote a yearlong column called 'Life begins at 50.' For this I tried all manner of new things, such as sewing, archery and indoor sky diving. Someone in my sewing class told me about National Novel Writing Month. Were you agree to write 50,000 words in the month of November and then submit the words to their website to be counted. The writers meet up regularly throughout November and help and encourage each other as well as talk about their work.

I have to be honest with you, still lacking in confidence at that point, I did not go to one of the National Novel Writing Month meetings, even though they were free and local to me. However, I did write the 50,000 words and after a long period of editing, self-published Paradox child, which was to be the first of three books. The third book again written in National Novel Writing Month, but that time I did go to the meetings and found them friendly and helpful.

Paradox Child was not what I had planned to write as right up to the night before I started I was going to write in a completely different genre. Paradox Child is about a girl who is a dreamer, as I am and set in the 1980s and is heavily influenced by the Pitt Rivers Museum in Oxford, where I work. I think it was mostly because I had to carry on working while I wrote it. Also because I was surrounded by the most amazing and magical objects that were in the museum daily.

Garden was my fourth book. It was written quickly, but was a long time in being edited. I think it is better for it and shows when it is read.

Was there sufficient support for you growing up in the UK as a child with dyslexia?

My dyslexia was not discovered until I was in my early 20's. I was married at the time with two small children, I was supporting my then husband in doing a course the Open University and Science foundation level course. I have always been interested in science, and he is now a scientist. The very first assignment I sent in, they picked up I was dyslexic. I was sent to Cardiff for a test. However, I did not get the results until after I had sat through the exam, which was good as I was given no information on dyslexia. My confidence has always been low, but back in those days it was non-existent. So, if I had gotten the result of the dyslexia test there and then, I would not have taken the exam.

I was not really given much help or information after that, just extra time in the exams. However, you have to remember this was before the internet so there was not the access to information where I lived in rural wales.

How many books have you published to date? Are they all within the same genre?

I have self-published three, The Paradox Child series and Autumn Orchard published one, Garden.

They are all steampunk. My youngest daughter Emily is a steampunk artist and introduced me to the genre. Emily also thought up many of the ideas in the book such as the vanity flowers and winged brooch. You can read about it here.

Do you find that the characters in your stories resemble you in any way? If so, how and which character?

I had not planned it, but more and more I began to realise that I resemble Aberdeen in Garden. I think I am still very much trapped in my childhood.

Aberdeen, loves gardens. I am a qualified gardener and have an allotment. Aberdeen spent the first part of her life on autopilot, not really fitting in anywhere. On earth she seeks out the garden as she is told she's not allowed to. This again is a bit like me, as when I got a place at university after my third child was born, my parents were not pleased, my mother at the time being old school did not believe that dyslexic was a real thing.

Aberdeen was lonely, she had a large capacity to love. I feel I wrote the best ending for her in the story. I was also asked to do some interviews for the characters, and Mrs. Merrywether is my fave. I talk all about it here.

How long have you been writing?

I have been making up stories in my head my whole life, 99 percent instantly forgotten as soon as I thought them up. I started writing them down when I was 50 years and 4 months old. I was 50 years old on June 14th 2013. I have now written 5 books, but am still trying to untangle the 5th one, which I wrote in November for the National Write a Book Month 2014, which I was ML for.

Have you used any of your art for the covers of your books?

I used my own photo of a blue bell woods, near Avebury called the west wood, for book two, which I photoshopped an image of a deer that my ex-husband took. I love these blue bell woods and wrote a short story which is in this book called, Figin, which is about a man who has 6 fingers and whose father is a fig tree, Emily helped make up this story as we walked through the woods. Sadly, I could not go this year as I have no car.

Book one and three covers were from my good friend Julia Collins.

Garden was by Raven.

Dan Thompson, a poet who is the face behind Autumn Orchard who published Garden, choice and paid for Raven to do this cover. It is awesome! Dan also edited Garden and added magical poetic words.

What was the inspiration behind the Paradox Child series?

Partly, my daughter Emily helped me with this. I was going to write a horror story first. Right up to the night before I started, that's what it was going to be about. Then a series of events happened and, to cut a long story short, I had to come up with a new idea. Emily said, why don't I write a children's book, as she said I was always making up stories for her as a child on the spot and never wrote them down. So that's what I did.

Plus I had to go to work when I was writing the first book and was surrounded by objects in the museum, so began to think what it would be like to time travel back to the time were the objects came from. Here is a little bit more on that.

For those who may not know, what is anthropology and archaeology, and what fascinates you about those two fields?

A simple answer is Anthropology is the study of people and Archaeology the study of things. However, both overlap. It was Archaeology and environment that I studied. Mostly, on how artists portray the past and how the artists' interpretations change over the years. In early depictions men are always portrayed hunting and outside, were as women are inside and by a fire cooking. Also there are shown no ugly, spotty or pregnant woman in earlier illustrations.

What are three things that are more of a struggle for an author in the realm of publishing if you have dyslexia?

Being taken seriously.

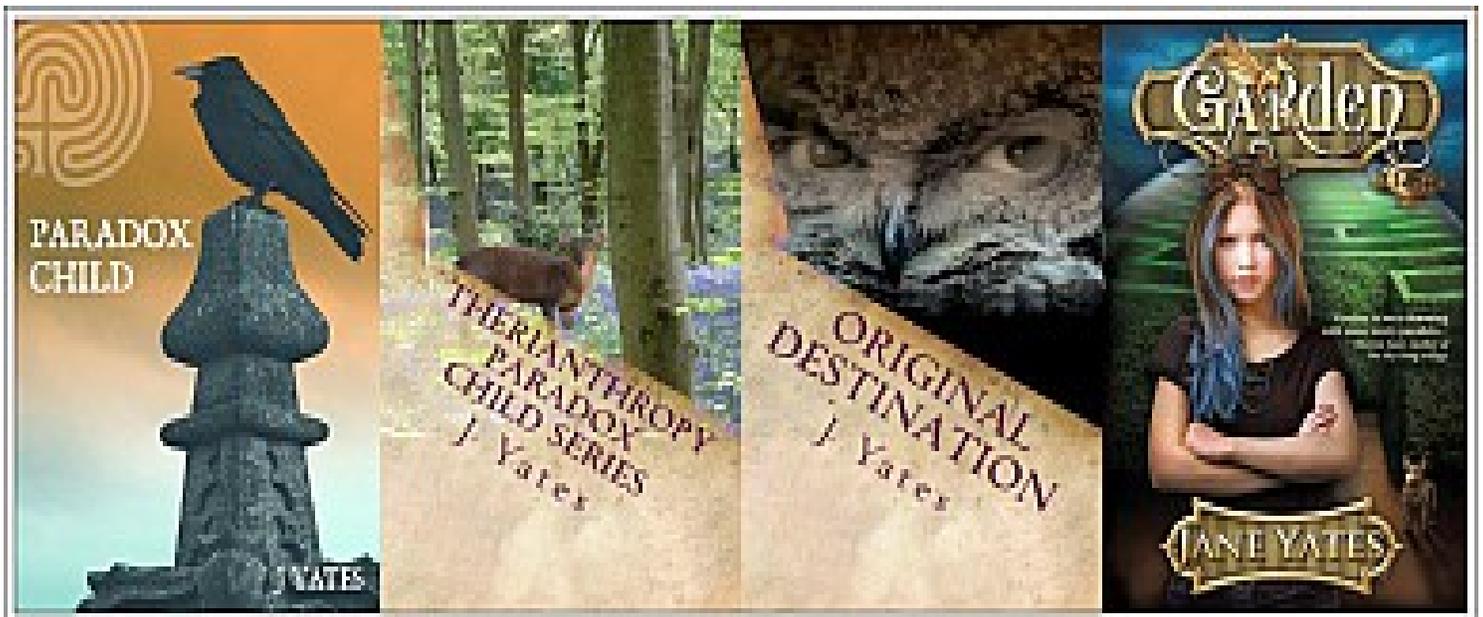
Just getting the story down in the right order.

Bad editors. That is people who tell you, "Yes they have corrected it." when in fact they just run it though the word processor and did not care as they KNEW you could not see the errors.

Congratulations! We heard you just recently got a tattoo. Do you just like getting tattoos, or does this one in particular hold special significance?

Oh yes!! I got this tattoo as a tribute to the Band Agony in the Garden. The lead singer Mack Perry who wrote a song based wrote 'Rain!' Rain was written by Mack Perry of Agony in the Garden for the scene were the children make rain, so if you love Garden you will love this song. Please download and show your support to this most awesome band.

Thanks for the amazing questions and thank you people for reading them. You can connect with me on Twitter at @jyparadoxchild.



Guest Article: What Makes a Cover "Art"?

By

The Royal Truth

Hello Readers, Writers and Precious Patrons. The Royal Truth is here, making our first collective appearance in 2015. Did you miss us? Wait, don't answer that! Well, whether the silent answer is yes, no or maybe, it is only fitting that we return in Issue 11's "Vision: Degrees Celsius".

When you last saw us, we were doing a bit of detective work and discovered a major cover crime—where one stock photo of an image lovingly called "The Man" was used on over eight different covers ... and probably counting!

In this issue, we give our perspectives on what makes a great cover. I, Queen, would dub this something majestic, like "The Incorporation of Visual Symmetry". Mini Truth would probably call it, "The Science of Cover Design"—which may be a contradiction in terms to some but makes all the sense in the world to her.

So, let's dive into these murky waters to get to the other side of comprehension and understanding.

*Side Note: Mini Truth here with a quick commercial break!
I'm just here for the ride and to put in my two cents whenever needed. * giggling *
You may proceed Queen.*

+++++

The Incorporation of Visual Symmetry (aka The Science of Cover Design)

When I was a little girl, I remember being pushed around in a grocery store shopping cart while my grandmother was doing shopping. From time to time, anyone from the clerk who knew my grandmother (since she was a frequent shopper there) to absolute strangers, would walk up to the cart.

Wait! I used to fling myself across the aisles on the cart at high velocities. Is that the same thing? Hmm, no. Probably not. Sorry Queen, ADD moment ... go on.

What was so captivating about my grandmother's cart? Did my grandmother know about some big sale that no one else knew? Did she happen to find the ripest tomato or the freshest bunch of mustard greens?

I realized later that all eyes were on me. She said everyone crooned over not only how still and well behaved I was in the store but how beautiful I looked.

That example wasn't given for me to brag about my beauty or manners but to drive home this universal point: It doesn't matter how much anyone says "it's the inside that counts", one must be drawn to the outside to step closer to want to explore the inside.

The cover of a book is no exception.

When a book cover is designed, one has to take into account several different factors. In later collaborations of The Royal Truth, we will actually take a deeper look into those things and how it affects an author's overall brand.

I am going to share what draws me to a book. In actuality, there is no difference between what is appealing to me as an author and what is appealing to me as a reader/reviewer. The cover also factors in slightly to what I rate a book, albeit not always the same every time. If the inside of the material is not so stellar, then having an outstanding cover only helps the book. If everything is fantastic but the cover, then that's a whole different ball game.

I would have to agree with Queen. It's like this ...

Imagine if you will that you went shopping at the grocery store (I went with this analogy because we were already talking about shopping, so I went with it.), and you're at the breakfast cereal aisle. You are sitting there staring at "Fruit Loops™" and "Fruity O's". "Fruity O's" price is right, they are basically the same thing as "Fruit Loops™", but there is something about that "Fruit Loops™" box that is calling your name. Maybe it's the red background, maybe the large bowl of cereal which happens to look so tempting. Suddenly, your mind is made up. "Fruity O's" might be at the right price, but "Fruit Loops™" just looks so much better. You've decided that while it's a whole 75 cents more than the other box, you're willing to invest that money because the box is nice. Wait! More, than nice ... it's calling your name!

The same rules apply when book shopping. You're on Amazon, or Barnes & Noble, and looking at Chick-Lit books; Sally Sue's book is \$3.99 and the cover is outstanding. While her reviews aren't all that great, the cover is worth loads. Jenny Jenkins' book is only \$0.99, her reviews are amazing, but her cover is lackluster.

You are absolutely absorbed by Sally Sue's imagery and color scheme, while Jenny Jenkins' cover is plain and uneventful. Simply put, it's ugly. Which book will you buy? Yup, that's right, Sally Sue's.

Balance Between Imagery, Space and Text

I am an individual that equates balance with beauty when it comes to a cover. What I mean is this: there has to be the right combination of images, blank space, and text. For me, if there are too many elements competing for center stage, my eyes get a bit crossed. In very rare cases, a slight migraine can pop up.



Let's take this cover. For me, there is way too much going on. I think this is an Independence Day celebration on one hand, because of the Red, White, Blue and the stars. On the other hand, it could be the symbol of romance, with the roses and the couple in the center. Why are the balloons even there? Why is the coloring of the couple mirroring "historical feel" and the decorations mirroring "modern feel"? Then there's this fancy font, and the imagery below ... I feel an overload of visuals coming!

I don't have a blurb to go on, so I cannot tell whether this is contemporary romance, historical fiction, or something else altogether.

Font Matching the Feel of the Story and Being Easy to Read

Confession: I am a font-a-holic. If you will permit a digression, I will share how that came to fruition.

I learned how to read very early, and I could hardly wait to start writing. One of my favorite classes was handwriting (or did they call it cursive writing back in those days?). Any way, I was all ready with my No. 2 pencil and my pad with the lines, practicing my penmanship. For me, each curve, loop, and line gave off a type of distinction--be it fancy, contemporary, modern, etc.

This conclusion stuck with me throughout my life. Although my writing isn't as neat as it was back in those days, it still has a bit of personality that gives you a look into my overall character.

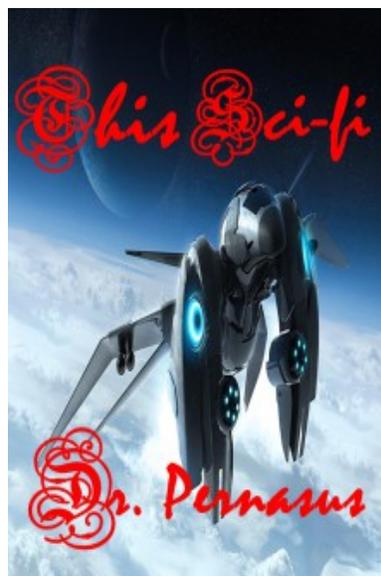
The font on the book cover serves that same cadence. If I'm reading a romance book, I anticipate the font to be flowy, even script like. If I'm reading a horror book, I expect a font that is cryptic and menacing.



Although the two people are “lovey-dovey”, the font is anything but. Romance or horror? Hard to decipher with this imagery.

Another component which scores high cover marks for me is the legibility of the font. It's not only important that the inside text is clear but the external text as well. It is the first exposure a reader has to the book before one opts to click “Look Inside” (if you're shopping online) or pick it up from a shelf and thumb through it (at a bookstore or library). It's no fun when you are spending time trying to tell a “C” from an “L” or an “O” from a “U”.

Yes, this may seem a bit silly. However, the author must understand that one is exposing the book to different types of readers, as well as different ages. Not every reader, particularly one who is older or may need a bit of extra help (contacts, glasses and the like) to see, will marvel at your artistic flair to make the font so fancy that one needs to call a detective or grab a magnifying glass to solve the mystery.



Um ... what? "Bliss Sci-Fi" ... "This Sei-li" ... "Jlies Sei-fi" ?!! Talk about Covers, Hooked on Phonics style. I have no idea what I'm reading, nor whom it's by. Is that a "N" or a "D"? I'm so baffled I don't even want to see what it's about.

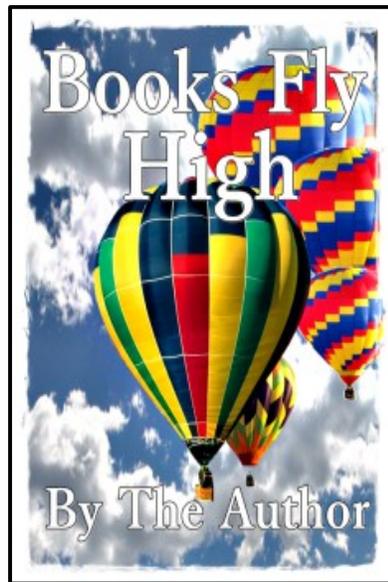
Focal imagery with a Purpose

Everyone wants a phenomenal cover. The sexy man. The drop dead gorgeous woman. The breathtaking landscape. Yet, how many people (particularly those drawn to realistic covers) connect the outside, what I refer to as focal imagery, with the content in the pages?

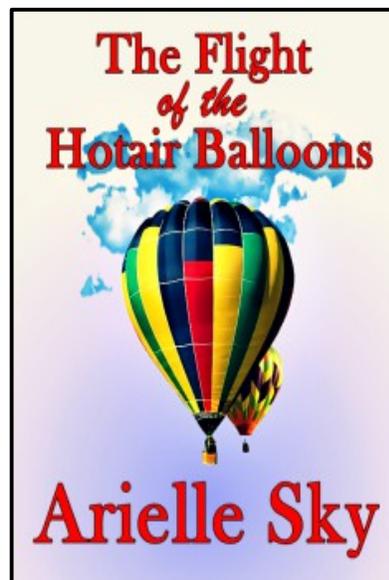
In my reviews, both for The Review Board and my own personal reads, there have been more situations than not where I was unable to connect what the image on the front had to do with the material.

So, in other words, not as many as one may think, or should.

To provide further clarification, we will provide both a bad (or what Mini Truth would deem a "What Not to Do") and a cover that correlates with my point.



In this cover, although the hot air balloons are beautiful, I'm stumped as to what hot air balloons have to do with books flying high.



Now this is more like it! This gives the balloons purpose without fully giving away the purpose.

Colors Matching the Content

When I read, I see more than just text. I pick up on tone. The colors an author selects should go beyond what is pretty or what is the author's favorite. It should correctly reflect the ambiance of the story. For inspirational stories, I think of lighter tones. For dark dramas and thrillers, I think of darker tones.

Here is a little monologue of how improperly used pigments can deliver negative impact. (Disclaimer: The title was used from a figment of the imagination and does not represent anyone's actual work.)

Molly was having a bit of a bad day. To take her mind off her troubles, she walked into the bookstore. There was a pretty cover that caught her eye--cream tones with a shiny cross in the middle.

"Keep One's Faith," Molly muttered aloud while picking the book up from the shelf. She looked on the back and the inside for any extra information about the content but could find none. As she started to thumb through the pages, the phone buzzed in her purse. It was Molly's reminder that it was time to make dinner. Smiling at the front cover, she rushed and paid for the book.

Once the kids were fed, she began reading the book. By the time Molly completed a quarter of the book, she realized she made a bad purchasing decision. "Keep One's Faith" wasn't about inspiring a person to stay in faith but about an unfortunate murder that happened in a church.

Was "Keep One's Faith" misclassified? It was in the religious section, so sometimes, all it takes is the right keywords. One would debate it was placed correctly; another would say that it was in the wrong spot.

With no blurb or synopsis written anywhere on the cover, the only thing Molly could go by was the symbol and the colors. To Molly, the cross represented Hope. The light pigments complementing the symbol of Hope made Molly anticipate a "feel good read".

If the background color was something darker, or the look of the cross more daunting, it is a high probability that Molly would have left this book in the store.

I have one Queen! Please allow me a moment to interject another cover faux pas. Let's talk professional blending.

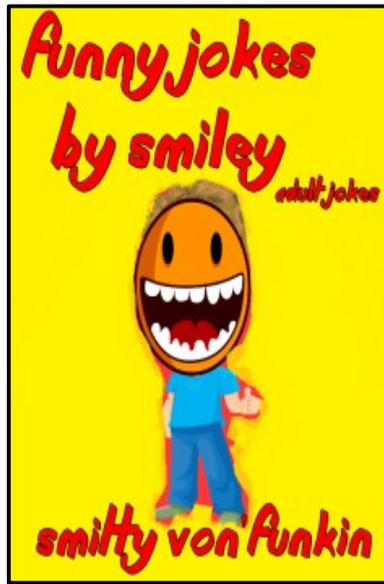
It Must Look Smooth

Maybe it's the designer in me, but I have a huge pet peeve with book covers that do not look polished and easy on the eyes. Here is what I mean:

When authors, specifically self-published authors, are making a cover for their book they have one of two choices; make it themselves or have a professional do it. For various reasons some authors opt to take it upon themselves to make their own cover. Well, kudos to you, that's great! Unless, you aren't a professional.

Of course you can find workshops on YouTube on how to "make your own book cover" and things of that nature, but just because you could doesn't mean you should. Not everyone is equipped with the talent that it takes to cohesively create professional grade cover art. This is where "Bad Blending" comes in.

I suppose it's best to show you rather than tell you. So here goes nothing ...



As you can plainly see from the cover above, it's a smiley face pasted on top of a body. The background was red, and the author wanted to make it yellow.

I mean, really? This looks more like a practical joke book for some REALLY, REALLY bad kids with no real taste in art.

Don't get me wrong Microsoft Paint is nice and all, but really though? Just ... well, just, NOPE!

There is nothing smooth about the imagery of the above cover.

So, just keeping it real, I have got to say; Authors you're better off paying.

+++++

In Conclusion

The author has to make sure to think of more than just fitting in with what's mainstream. Colors, content, cohesiveness, and readability play a big factor.

Just think of it this way, dear author: If you were the reader and saw your cover online or in the book aisle, without a blurb to go on, would YOU select YOUR cover?

One last thing, if you are absolutely certain that you cannot produce a quality cover then do some research and have it done professionally. You can't blame readers for not buying your book when you wouldn't buy it yourself if you were them.

It's the difference between "Fruit Loops™" or "Fruity O's".

Thanks for checking out this rendition of The Royal Truth.





True or False



1. LGBTQIA Erotica is one of the most difficult genres to market.

Speculatively True.

While per my research I was not able to find substantial proof that LGBTQIA Erotica is the hardest genre to market (this is probably due to the fact that most people will not openly admit it), per my experience it seems to be.

The LGBTQIA Erotica genre is very controversial, and many people still remain closed minded to the prospect of it. Therefore, whether openly or quietly, it is not so widely received by the literary public.

I did do some research to find if there were any statistics available but found none. This is why my answer is "Speculatively True".

2. There is a huge difference between a blurb and a synopsis.

True.

While at first glance these two seem to be the same thing, they are indeed very different. First, allow me to present you with the meanings.

Blurb (noun)

A promotional description of the contents of a story, as found on the jackets or back of books.

Synopsis (noun)

A condensation or brief review of a subject; a summary; a brief outline.

Here is the major difference that makes these two things distinct, especially as it pertains to the Writing World.

Blurb

A product's description, meant to entice the reader into picking the book up. Therefore, it should not have any "give aways/spoilers" as to what transpires inside the pages of the book.

Synopsis

Used to describe every aspect of the book in a brief and revealing way. Think of your 3rd Grade Book Reports.

3. The average length of a book trailer should be determined by word count and complexity of the book's content.

False.

The determining factor of a Book Trailer is and has always been the Author/Publisher. While there is a “typical” length (that being between 1 & 2 minutes), the ultimate length is fully determined by the Author/Publisher.

Usually, Graphic Designers suggest that the Book Trailer stay in the 2 minutes ballpark as they want to keep the reader’s attention. However, this is by no means written in stone. It’s just an opinion.

4. Using too many Twitter tags in promoting your product is a turn off to the audience.

False.

Twitter Tags (also called Hashtags) is all the rave. Moreover, it’s a great way to have your stuff located by “key word searches”. Typically, a person will go to Twitter and type the word “book”, for example, in the search engine. If you’ve utilized the “hashtag book (#book)” on you post you have a higher probability of being found.

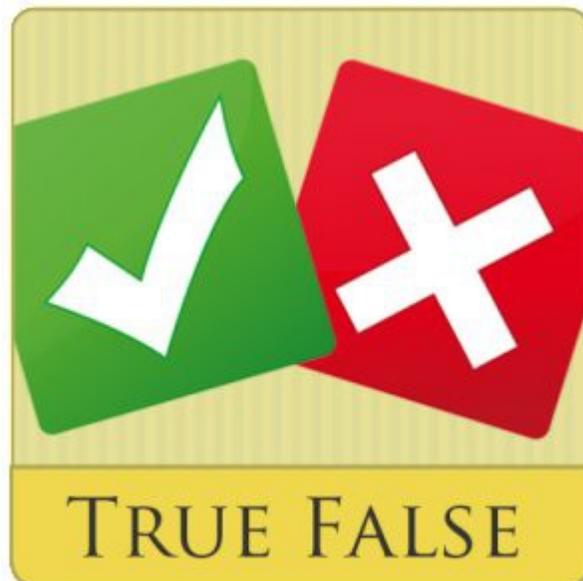
Admittedly, it might pester some people, but 9 times out of 10, people will appreciate a Twitter Tag on your posts.

5. One should keep his personal and professional persona separate to the general public.

True.

The worst thing an Author can do for their professional rapport is to tangle it with their personal life. It is one thing for your friends and family to know your personal life, but for your fans, it’s not always the best thing. Exceptions would probably be an “up close and personal blog post” or author interview to perhaps share some intimate experience that might’ve changed your life somehow. Like a testimony per se, but that’s it.

You see, it is true that your audience wants to know you’re human, but they aren’t interested in your personal havoc. Save the drama for your books.





All About Indie with Harmony Kent
Vision Degrees Celsius
Judging a Book by its Cover

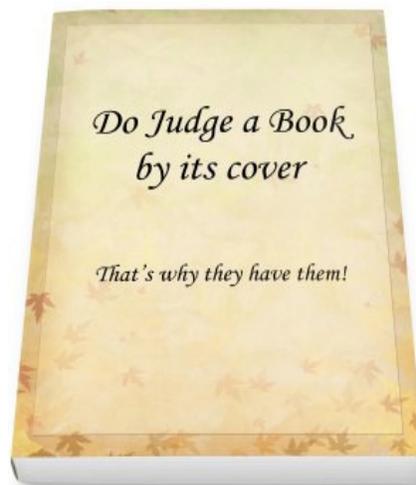
Hello, and welcome to issue 11 of All Authors Magazine. In issues 9 and 10, we talked about how to format and fine-tune your raw MS ready for print and/or e-book, and how to convert into an e-book file. In this issue, we turn our focus to book covers.

Even if we are not particularly artistic, everyday vision affects our decisions more than we might credit. The well-known adage, “Don’t judge a book by its cover,” is one we all routinely ignore. At least in the initial purchasing stage. Once we have read the book, the saying becomes so very true, as the cover no longer has much bearing on how we feel about the book.

However, if we get the cover wrong, it can drastically affect our book sales. Does our cover raise the degrees celcius to scorching hot, or leave the potential reader down at minus fifty degrees?—Cold and uninterested, or even repulsed. What is it that makes a good book cover?

First and foremost, any book cover has to work well at thumbnail size. This is the single most important point in any book cover design, and one that is often overlooked. Is it eye-catching at this small size? Can the title be read easily at this small size? The font style you choose might look stunning at a large resolution, but end up indecipherable when reduced down to the tiny thumbnail-size used by lots of online book retailers.

The cover needs to say something about the book, about its content, and indicate what a reader can expect from it. Many a reviewer has commented that they were initially put off by the cover, because it looked too “cartoony” or whatever, and then go on to say that they ended up loving the story. Clearly, these kinds of covers are not doing their jobs.



The phrase not to judge a book by its cover comes from an age when books didn't have beautiful jacket illustrations, and may well have a plain red or black board cover instead. If it had been well loved, it might even be creased and stained from much handling. So, one could well judge this book to be unattractive and thus dismiss it, but in actuality it is a great book.

Obviously, in our modern day and age, with graphics and computer illustrations readily available and easily used, we have an abundance of different and beautiful book covers, and there is no need for them to be poorly presented. The 3D graphic above took me minutes to make, and even though it is simple, it has a certain attraction to it. Sometimes, covers can be too complicated, which actually detracts from their appeal to a potential reader.

You don't need to be an artist to make your own book cover. I'm not that great at drawing. I have my moments, but it's a slow and laborious process for me, and hit-and-miss at best. I have image manipulation software that I use to make digital images, and sometimes to enhance something I have drawn. It certainly helps if you have an eye for the visual, but by adhering to a few simple points, you can come up with something fairly effective.

There are some websites out there that give you the option of premade templates, and while they might do in a pinch, if you can at all avoid this avenue, do. The last thing you want is for your masterpiece of a book to look like all the rest. You don't want it to blend in, but to stand out. The cover needs to entice a reader to buy your book, instead of the one listed next to it.

I mentioned that there are some simple points you can use to come up with a good book cover. What are those simple points?

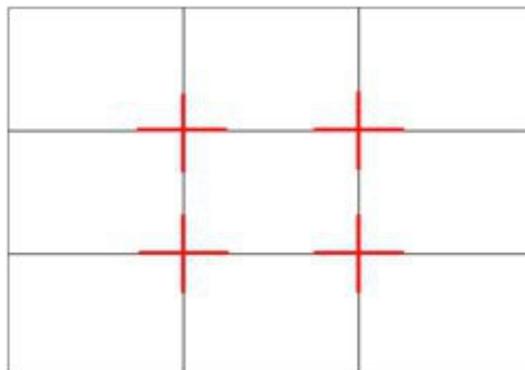
Choose a font readily readable at small sizes

1. Keep it simple
2. Rule of thirds
3. Don't fall into clichéd cover designs for your genre

By "rule of thirds", I mean visualising your graphic area split into three sections. As a rule of thumb, it isn't best to centre your images, but to have them at certain points. See the example below ...



and the grid this is based on:



Note the “intersection” points in red. These are where you would place your “points of interest” on any images you are working with. You have four areas that are useful positions to place elements at. As well as nine sections to work within. To go into this in depth is beyond the scope of this article, but if you do a web search you will come up with lots of helpful websites and tutorials on the rule of thirds. I first came across this rule as a beginning homemade greetings card maker, and it has since stood me in good stead for making book covers.

When I talk about keeping it simple, I mean that you need to avoid clutter. While the cover wants to say something about the essence of the book, it doesn't want to attempt to tell the whole story. It needs to be readily identifiable at first glance ... at least enough to grab one's attention. There are some clever covers I've seen that do reveal themselves the more you look at them, but they are still designed in such a way to grab your immediate attention as you browse down a list of thumbnails.

Book covers are billboards meant to lure in potential readers. That is the long and the short of it. A truly great cover is one that captures the essence of the book in a fundamental way. You don't have to use pictures necessarily ... you could go for the abstract ... your imagination is your only limit.

If you hire a cover designer, instead of creating your own, then they absolutely must be willing to read your book in order to do a good job. If they haven't read it, how can they accurately capture it? Cheap usually isn't better. I have seen numerous folks on Twitter advertising \$5 book covers, but I would be sceptical about using these. Firstly, are they offering a choice of fixed templates at that price, or is it truly a unique design? Secondly, how personal is the service going to be at that price? Are they really going to spend the time to read your novel and tailor a design especially for it? More likely, you will end up with “something like,” and not likely anything special.

Anna Lewis of *Publishing Talk* offers four steps to creating a good cover for yourself (my additions appear in italics) ...

1. Create a mood board (gather fonts you like, images that express your ideas and book/etc.). [Of course, this can be a folder on your computer, instead of an actual board.]
2. Research other covers of books in a similar genre. [See what works and what doesn't. This will help you avoid just being more of the same, too.]
3. Obtain good quality images. [There are plenty of royalty free and low priced or free options out there.] Image resolution for book covers needs to be higher than the standard screen resolution of computers.
4. Consider the different formats you need. [That is, you need an e-book cover and a paperback cover, and the spread for these is different.]

Before you put your cover “out there,” you absolutely must proofread it. You'd be amazed how many authors overlook this aspect of cover design. A spelling mistake or punctuation gaffe on your cover will put off most potential readers, not to mention looking sloppy and unprofessional. Proofread everything: the title, the author name, any other info on there, and most of all, the blurb on the back cover.

When searching for images to use, you must keep an eye out for copyright, and usage permissions. Some images have a licence for free use as long as it is not a commercial project, and this would—of course—rule out using it on your book. Others are available for commercial use and so you would be fine to use these. There are paid options such as “Shutterstock” and “Dreamstime” for photos and some graphics. “Deviant Art” is a website full of artists and photographers who will often sell you their images for not too much outlay, and some offer their images for free. Again, be sure to check the usage restrictions, ask for permission where you need to, and always, always give credit at the front of your book, even if permission isn't required. It's always good to acknowledge the artist's hard work and generosity.

To make your own book cover, good image software is essential, and worth putting some money into. I use Photoshop, and was lucky enough to purchase this before Adobe brought out the monthly licence thing. There are others out there, some of them even free, but you need something easy to use and as versatile as you can get it. At the very least, you need a program that will allow you to work in layers. This is because you build your cover from the bottom up. That is, the background up to the topmost image or text. It is much easier if you are able to isolate layers and work on them independently of the others, especially when you find you need to tweak just one thing. If you have everything all together, a simple adjustment can turn into a nightmare of a job.

Don't forget about the back cover (for paperbacks), and the spine. These are just as important as the front cover. On paperbacks, the spine is often what a reader will see when browsing shelves in a bookshop. The very thing they do once they have pulled it off the shelf and glanced at the front, is to flip to the back and read the blurb. So, the whole thing needs to be balanced, and the three elements (back, spine, front) should flow one into the other.

The dimensions of your paperback design depend upon the page count of your book. Print on demand publishers (such as Createspace, for example) offer templates that you can generate for your particular page count and download to design your book cover around. That way, your spine and all the rest is exactly where you need it to be and at the right thickness for the finished binding. Do remember to allow for "cutting" and "bleeding" in the printing and assembly process of your book. Again, the templates offered by the main print on demand services show these areas, so you know to avoid putting anything important (such as text) in that area. You also need to decide upon the size of your book before you put your book cover together. The most universally accepted size is 6X9 inches, but of course the choice is yours.

For most platforms, you will need jpeg and PDF versions of your cover for uploading purposes, and if you intend to do cover reveals then these (and perhaps PNGs) will be helpful for uploading to blogs, etc.

The 3D graphic I made earlier was done in Photoshop, using "actions" that I downloaded for free from PSDCovers.com. They have lots and lots of actions to choose from, and (at the time of writing this article) are generous enough to offer these for free.

These kinds of 3D mock-ups can be useful for making pre-release book images for marketing purposes, which includes having a "book" to display on your book movie trailer before you actually have a book printed! I have even made a coffee mug with my book cover "wrapped" around the body of the mug.

So, these days, I'd beware of the saying, "Seeing is believing," because quite obviously this isn't the case. We have a book that looks like a book, but isn't a book. What it is, is a vision.



With the right graphics software and plugins, this is the kind of stuff we can make with ease on our computers. I made this mug for one of my recent blog posts, and again it took me just minutes. It even comes with shadows and reflections of light. With 3D imaging being this easy, you can see how easy it will be to make a simple, one-dimensional book cover. So, bring your vision to life, and crank up the "degrees celcius" on your book sales. Happy creating, and we'll see you in issue 12.



Ask AJ

Copyright

The question for this issue of ASK AJ comes from Susanna of Long Island.



The question:

I've noticed more and more lately that there are books being released with the same exact titles as other books on the market. It's like a growing trend. I can't tell you how many books I found the other day called "Angel", and that's just an example. Isn't that copyright infringement or something? Like, isn't that illegal somehow?

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This question is a common one, and one that can be a bit confusing.

COPYRIGHT



Copyright - a term for protection of creative works - can be applied to many things, in this instance, written works. But let's get more specific and talk about books.

As far as words go, the book title and the body of the book (the written words that make up the story), are the two things we will focus on with this issue's question.

Starting with the body of the book, as you write each word, it is considered copyrighted at that moment. You are the originator and creator of the work. That is the short-form answer, but it is legally copyrighted at that point. You can take copyrighting a step further and register your work with the Library of Congress where it is assigned a copyright number and stored in their system for the creator's life, plus seventy years. The LOC offers different ways to register your work with them: an online form, or you can go through the older route and send a physical copy through the mail.

As far as the title of a story or book goes; to put it short and sweet...there is no copyright protection. This is why you may find many titles with the exact same name. The U. S. Copyright Office does not typically allow someone to copyright a book title because titles are not considered intellectual property, but are only "short slogans," which are not eligible to be copyrighted. Their line of thinking is that 'titles' are short and not in the spirit of copyright protection (ie: short stories, novellas, novels). This leaves a wildcard in the canvas of copyrights.

TRADEMARK



Trademark protects words, phrases, symbols or designs identifying the source of the goods of one party and distinguishing them from those of others. Brand names like Coca-Cola, Holiday Inn, and Band-Aid are all protected. That's the legal-jargon explanation.

Trademarks aren't handed out so freely, unlike copyright protection. If the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office doesn't consider your title a distinctive mark that is distinguishable and indisputable from others, you will not be granted trademark protection. This is the reason why you see so many books with the same names. Most words are considered too generic to warrant protection.

Part of the trademark's job is to protect creators as well as consumers. It can help keep a consumer from confusing well-known works in brick-and-mortar bookstores or online stores, from others. For example, let's look at a very popular, and recent book/series. If someone were shopping for "The Fifty Shades of Gray" title, and ran across another book with the same wording in the title, without taking a closer look, they may think they have picked up the original aforementioned title, but may end up with a completely different book and author.

Titles and branded phrases can be trademarked, but as I said before, it's very difficult to get the status of 'trademark'.

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This was a bit of a long-winded answer, but I wanted to give Susanna a thorough explanation. My advice to you, when thinking of a title for your book, is to do your research on your projected name, and see how many books have the same or similar title.

Being creative and remaining unique are just two of the keys in creating your own brand. Best of luck in creating, building, and nailing your novel, and be sure to top it off with a title that you feel speaks your voice and captures the spirit of your work.

~ALJ~

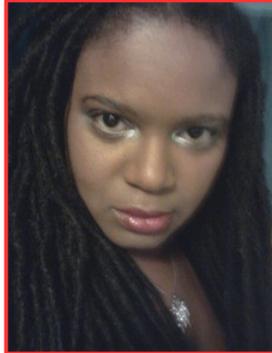
Do you have a question for AJ? Send to admin@allauthorspp.net. Your question could be used in an upcoming issue!



Dare to Share The Temperatures of Vision

By

Queen of Spades



Vision—it goes beyond just one’s ability to use one’s eyes to see. It is about having a game plan, whether it is for your personal life or professional life. To maneuver through your personal life is one thing but to make professional moves puts you on an *entirely* different playing field.

A while back, I got a promotion of sorts. I didn’t do a whole lot of fanfare. In my mind, I was just doing what I normally do on a day-to-day. Now, as I reflect, it slowly started dawning on me why this promotion is a bit of a whoop—not just for me but for one who dared to share the vision.

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When a person starts generating an idea, one doesn’t immediately think of the people taking part. If anything, the idea has a lot of “I” as well as “my”. Why shouldn’t it? After all, you are the originator of the idea.

Before there was anything “All Authors” there was a group. A group known as the “Self-Published & Indie Authors Support Group” on Goodreads, founded by an author to help other authors. This author felt it was important to have a place for people to support each other, due to what she had seen in the industry (for one) and what she had experienced on her own publishing journey (for two). Plus, there was a call then for something different. Something that extended beyond the following:

1. Brief intro
2. Marketing push
3. Repeat

In this cycle, no one really got a chance to know each other and it seemed that all people were doing were dropping off a title (regular price or promo) and then going on to another group, and doing the same thing.

This author desired to build a better (as well as different) mousetrap if you will. Not only could an author have a forum to drop off a promotion but a person could also ask questions, as well as receive advice. Yes, others usually stepped up to answer, but if no one else did, then this author did.

Seeing how well the Self-Published & Indie Author Support Group (SPIASG) performed on Goodreads, her vision became bigger: cooperation on a larger scale using people’s blogs as vessels—serving the purpose of readers getting a chance to know the authors while authors received exposure to different audiences.

SPIASG’s wordiness was simplified to become All Authors—All Authors Support Group and All Authors Blog Blitz.

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As many of you know, that is how I got acquainted with the author in question, whom we all know as Y. Correa. High off the success of All Authors Support Group (AASG) and All Authors Blog Blitz (AABB), expansion seemed the logical next step. This expansion included a graphic design segment, a magazine, and a publishing house.

Yet expansion involved more than just “I” and “my”—there would have to be some “extra”. There would have to be a team to get the rest together.

When a person has a vision, it is natural to want to share with your friends. So, she sought out some friends to be a part of the magazine. Although she had not known me for that long, she liked my talent and thought I would be a great addition as a columnist. It wasn’t that far of a stretch for me—I did write editorial pieces in high school and did a few writes for a newsletter for one of my old employers.

Yet, an important piece of the vision was missing—to make sure that all of the friends were operating on the same *wavelength*. It’s hard to get people to take a direction of an organization seriously when everyone’s concept of why one is a part of the business is vastly different.

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I will digress to talk about my own office dynamic for a better illustration. Names have been changed to protect the guilty and the observant.

Let’s say there are eight people in the office building. Three are in positions of power, three are the direct subordinates of the ones in power, one is an administrative assistant to one of the people in power, and one is being shared between the other two in power.

1. Giles, Martha, and Murray are in high positions of power.
2. Rich, Gennie, and Patrice are direct subordinates.
3. Rosa is Martha’s administrative assistant.
4. Francine is being shared between Giles and Murray.

Francine and Patrice’s vision for the company is similar—with communication and cooperation, the business’ productivity will increase by forty-five percent.

Rosa somewhat agrees, but since she knows Martha and Patrice have bumped heads in the past, her focus is more on loyalty to Martha, since Martha has always been very good to her.

Rich is invested in the numbers but is lousy in communication with anyone. The only time Rich speaks up is in situation of chaos, like when Giles discovers there is an error in Rich’s department and Giles is trying to figure out what’s going on. Giles has an extensive network that benefits the business and has those outside parties to answer to if things go wrong. Francine and Patrice’s vision means nothing to him if the outside funding and support falls through. To be honest, Giles is focused more on his own agenda, looking good as the “face of business” as opposed to keeping a more discerning eye on the business.

Murray is the new executive on the block who took over for Joey. He is discovering how little Joey did during his tenure. Gennie’s (who now reports to Murray) attitude towards the business is lackadaisical because her previous boss adopted that same attitude and let her do what she wanted. This includes taking longer than usual lunches, coming in late, and leaving early. There is friction between Murray and Gennie, because he brought his direct, continuous check-in management style into a business that does things almost one hundred and eighty degrees different and has been that way for years!

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Back to Operation All Authors—The Expansion.

Needless to say, everybody was not on the same page—not just in the pursuit of all things magazine but also in the pursuit of the other endeavors. When that happens, one is forced to make some tough decisions, made even more trying when the person is actually your friend.

Some decisions downgraded friendships into mere acquaintances, while others whittled bonds into sawdust. No matter whether one is starting out or has been around for many years, turnover and growing pains are a necessary evil.

Through it all, I stuck around and found myself at a crossroads. I was experiencing déjà vu due to my involvement. My responsibility had increased, and I discovered I had placed my input in things that surpassed my role as being a columnist and by this time, Editor-in-Chief. I questioned myself: Who was I to do this? Furthermore, could I put myself in a predicament similar to the one I was in decades ago—in a position of great power only to get it snatched away by too many egos?

Fear of a repeat kept me at bay for the longest, yet the urge to remain part of her vision, the All Authors' Vision, rallied against that fear every single day.

One day, after a nasty fiasco, I became very tired and very confused. I was serving too many roles—roles I believed I had no business serving. I no longer wanted to do the battle of what I could say and what I couldn't say, what I could do and what I couldn't do. I didn't want to care too much about a vision I was not part of, completely and indisputably.

I'm the type of person that is willing to go all the way, but the other party or parties have to want me to do so. I don't do anything half assed, and I give my all on things I'm passionate about. I have little to no patience for those who don't possess the same gumption.

I laid things down in my own way. I can't run things for a chief when I'm not the chief, or in the chief's category. With that said, I left Y to look closely at her vision, decide whether it was feasible and whether she still wanted others to be a part. Or, was she too burned by previous experiences, and as a result, allow those growing pains to haunt her forever?

Whoever said the 1st year of business is the toughest year wasn't lying!

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This year marked a different stride. A creator's jaw set in determination. Knocked down but back up, ready to dust off the pink yoga pants and get back into the fight.

It was challenging for me to stick to my guns—to fight getting too invested at this stage. Setting my own boundaries (personally and professionally) not only prevented resentment but also kept me focused and invigorated. In addition, this gave more time to establish a solid rapport and to really see what each of us brought to the table, not just as fellow writers and visionaries, but also as people.

Then, when she was ready, and **when I believed** we both were ready, I accepted my next promotion. I shifted from Featured Columnist, to Editor-in-Chief, to Vice-President and Business Partner.

Daring to share one's vision is a daunting thing. Even knowing someone's abilities and work ethic, there is taking the risk and going out on faith. In the equation, Y is the risk taker; I am the one of caution yet there is just enough differential to provide that special balance.

It is that very special balance and the willingness to preserve what works and throw away what doesn't that keeps the temperature of the All Authors' Vision piping hot. Quite honestly, I don't see it cooling off anytime soon!

Visionaries, keep on blazing!



Beloved RWPP's:

Have you dared to share your Vision, or has your Vision come under fire? Send your thoughts to queenofspades@allauthorspp.net. Your response could be used in a future issue.



THE CROOK ANALYSIS BY FREDERICK H CROOK

Science Fiction Writers: Visionaries, Trend Followers or Just Hacks?

Science fiction writers are sometimes given accolades for predicting the creation of technological devices or are even given credit for helping to shape the future with their works. Star Trek received a lot of credit some years back when flip phones became popular. In 1953, an Algis Budrys story, Protective Mimicry mentioned the use of fax machines. In 1887, Edward Bellamy wrote Looking Backward, 2000 – 1887, in which he describes a world of the year 2000 where authors pay to have their works published and homes feature a music service distributed over the telephone lines.

So, let me address the question proposed by the title of this article. Are science fiction authors visionaries, trend followers or just hacks?

Yes. Yes we are.



Just let me explain.

In my own works, I feature characters with bio-electronic implants that can communicate with one another via text or audible message. The devices include custom lenses that fit upon the eyes and project data screens or media, can manipulate the magnification of their view and even filter light or compensate for darkness. Imagine this evolution of the smart phone, injected into one's body in the form of nanobots which swim to where they need to be and assemble themselves.

Neat, right? I thought you'd like that. The only thing is that none of this is my idea. I follow technology and do my research, so I know where we are now when it comes to the state of the art bio-electronics, so stretching my imagination just a little bit goes a long way. For any piece of technology that I've ever featured in anything I've written, there's a very real item that it was based upon.

Isaac Asimov wrote a great many things, but is perhaps best known for his stories about robots. In particular, a short story from 1942, entitled, *Runaround*, where he introduced the three laws of robotics: 1. A robot may not injure a human being or, through inaction, allow a human being to come to harm. 2. A robot must obey the orders given it by human beings, except where such orders would conflict with the First Law. 3. A robot must protect its own existence as long as such protection does not conflict with the First or Second Laws.

As is human nature, we love to complicate things and become righteous via overregulation. The Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council and the Arts and Humanities Research Council of Great Britain have created their own set of guidelines, which, though they don't resemble Asimov's, certainly exist from his forewarning of necessity.

Alas, we still don't have robot servants in the home. We are just getting to the point where driverless cars may soon become an option. So, does that mean that he got it wrong? Well, maybe. From his point of view and fed from his education, there was no reason for him to not write about robots becoming an everyday household item/companion within his lifetime. He passed away in 1992 and we still haven't achieved that.

Robert A. Heinlein was also a writer of hard science fiction. Among his vast body of work, you may recognize the title, *Starship Troopers*, a story about an interstellar war between alien bugs and humans, where the idea of an armored exoskeleton was explored.

Improved and interactive body armor has been experimented with for many years, but we seem to be a long way from equipping our foot soldiers with strength-enhanced limbs.

Arthur C. Clarke is another giant mind in science fiction. As the writer of *2001: A Space Odyssey* and *2010: Odyssey Two*, he described space travel in great detail. In fact, he was such an expert, he wrote *Interplanetary Flight: An Introduction to Astronautics* even before that, back in 1950!

So, for everything that science fiction writers including the above, "Big Three" have created within their realms of imagination, damn little of it actually comes true. For the most part, you should be grateful, people! What if H.G. Wells had been right?



Think of that! It's hard to imagine science fiction stories that are almost all positive in nature. The most prolific of future possibilities that I know of is the *Star Trek* universe. Even here, evil must run rampant or there is no story. Imagine *Star Trek* without Klingons. Yeesh...boooooiiiiing.

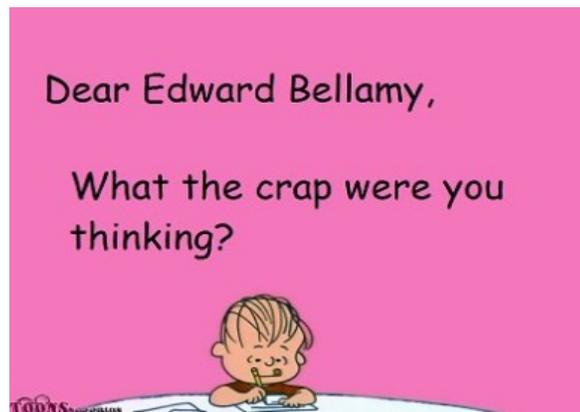
If there are any aspiring science fiction writers reading this, all I can say is don't be afraid of your own imagination. By my example, that is, simply taking current technology and improving upon it works for the dystopian future of my novels and short stories, but stopping there won't do for many other types of science fiction. Sometimes, a really "out there" idea is called for. Think of the lightsabers of *Star Wars*. That seemingly minor invention is a mind twister if you give it a moment's contemplation: A powerful laser that can cut through anything. Check. It's powered by something lightweight and is wielded quite easily in up to two hands. Woah, what? But wait, there's more. The light terminates or becomes benign and turns into incoherent light, invisible in the human spectrum of vision by changing frequency, only a meter or so from its origin. Both options are rather impossible, at least by what we know of in our reality.

Holy freakin' WOW! A lightsaber is one hell of a leap. In fact, it's damned impractical. Yet, without it, what would Star Wars look like? Would it ever have gained popularity beyond the first movie?



My point in all this is to convey the importance of knowing the state of technology while understanding that your imagination has no limits. Go ahead and write that realistic dystopian future if you'd like, and/or create that mind-blowing space opera with the amazing toys. There's no stopping you. Just be careful to make it something original and different. That's getting harder to do all the time.

In closing, know these facts: Algis Budrys's story, Protective Mimicry, as read on the air in its 'X-Minus One' radio show form, also featured a nuclear powered in-window air conditioner. Edward Bellemey also never bothered to try to predict many other items in his Looking Back, 2000-1887 novel, including forms of transportation. That's right, the word automobile never graces the pages of the novel, even though the Karl Benz invention, the petrol powered Motorwagen, had been released the year before. Talk about a missed opportunity to expand!



I know, right? Anywho, that's why I say that it pays to be aware of the current state of technology before attempting anything of this scale. You never know, you may find an item along the way that inspires several other stories.

Keep cranking on those stories, kids!

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To connect with Frederick H. Crook, Sci-Fi author, visit:

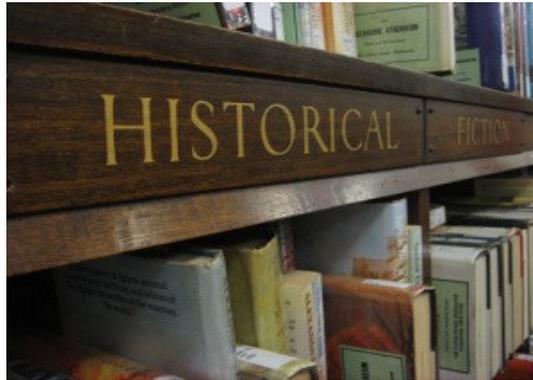
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Historical Harbor



Why Write Historical Fiction?

By

Douglas Boren

Why write Historical Fiction? Indeed, I have asked myself that on occasion, when trying to “shop” my manuscript around to various publishers. Many, it seems, are far more interested in the genres that are more popular...that will make them more money. Some publishers go so far as to limit their submissions to only certain types of genres, effectively knocking mine out of the running.

Billions have been made in the romance novel industry. Almost as much in the Sci-fi world. What about Historical Fiction? A look at the Listopia featured at GoodReads shows that almost every genre has more titles listed than Historical fiction.

Observe:

Non Fiction: 608

Sci-fi: 686

Horror: 485

Children: 559

Teen: 691

“Novels”: 421

Romance: 2007

Young Adult: 1278

At the near bottom of the list of titles is Historical Fiction, at only 373. Once again the question is asked, why write Historical Fiction? Surely there is more money to be made, less aggravation to be had, and a wider, larger audience to target than this.

Let us look at what Historical Fiction really is. Historical Fiction presents a story set in the past, often during a significant time period.

In Historical Fiction, the time period is an important part of the setting and often of the story itself. Historical Fiction may include fictional characters, well-known historical figures or a mixture of the two. As an author of Historical Fiction I try to pay close attention to the details of the story to ensure that they fit the time periods in which the narratives take place. In some Historical Fiction, famous events appear from points of view not recorded in history, showing historical figures dealing with actual events while depicting them in a way that is not recorded in history.

This is the heart of the matter. To relate history in a way that is not recorded as “history”. History is about a lot more than facts, figures, dates or even events. It is, as half of the word suggests, the story. If told the right way can be one of the greatest stories ever told. Good and evil, triumph and tragedy, moving sacrifices, tremendous bravery. I firmly believe that history is a story of ordinary people, much like ourselves, and how they face the challenges of life, overcome obstacles, and persevere in times of great difficulty. Some of these people are “famous”, but even they have the same emotions...the same loves, hate, fear, greed, and more, that we all do.

Sometimes “ordinary”, not famous people shape history, by their actions, their words, or in some way that moves the “famous” historical figures. Who, for example, sold Jack Ruby the gun that killed Lee Harvey Oswald? What did he think afterwards? Why did he do it? Or the Roman centurion who, on the hillside of Calvary, was moved to observe, “Truly this was a man of God”. What is his back story?

When one looks at history through the eyes of ourselves, we see things more clearly, more emotionally, more emphatically. When we are entertained as we are educated, it is more fun, more lasting, and more rewarding.

While it may be important to remember December 7th, 1941 as the “day of infamy”, wouldn’t you like to muse on what went through the mind of the Japanese pilot who sunk the Arizona? Or the GI who fought a hangover in the midst of fighting for his life? What about the nurse working tirelessly in the hospital that desperately needed more blood?

Again, history is a story. It is a series of stories in the book of life that is forever and perpetually being written. They say that a people that don’t learn from history are doomed to repeat the mistakes of history. If that is true, then it is imperative that we all do our share of learning.

This is why I write Historical Fiction. Not for fame, and certainly not for fortune, I want to educate as I entertain. If someone can learn or be moved because of my efforts, it is all worth it. James Michener, and John Jakes did this as masters of their craft. I hope that I can do at least comparably as well.



My offering can be summarized in the video that I made which can be found at this website.

I invite you to look further by going to DouglasBoren.com.

Why write Historical Fiction? It is my goal, and my belief, the Historical Fiction makes people want to learn history!



Short Story Station

By

Beem Weeks



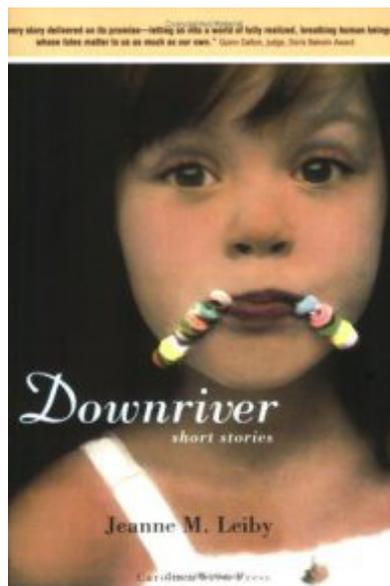
I am a garage sale junkie. I spend many summer mornings going through the stuff other people no longer want cluttering up their homes. I search primarily for music CDs. With the advent of digital downloads, MP3 players, and the like, CDs can be had for a dollar each—or less!

I also find books I've been meaning to read. Best sellers in near-perfect condition often go for a couple of dollars—compared to fifteen or twenty dollars the booksellers demand.

Every so often I'll find a gem that maybe didn't quite make anybody's best seller list. You know the ones: interesting cover, intriguing blurb on the back, a young author showing promise. This is how I came across a collection of short stories by a writer of whom I'd never heard. I found this book lying in a box with other books designated for sale to benefit a high school girl's senior trip to a place I no longer recall.

I picked the book from the box, thumbed through its pages, got a feel for style and content. But it was the author's short bio on the back cover that sealed the deal for me.

The book is called *Downriver*, and it's written by Jeanne M. Leiby. Not a household name, sure, but Miss Leiby grew up in my home state of Michigan. I have a soft spot for Michiganders, be they writers, actors, or musicians. I feel the need to at least give them a chance to show me they're worth supporting.



After purchasing the short story collection mid-summer 2013, I added it to the growing pile of books sitting in my closet. There it sat for several months, just waiting its turn to dazzle me. That turn finally arrived in early November.

To say Jeanne M. Leiby's work pulled me in is an understatement. She writes the way people talk. She adds little quirks to her characters that you would swear you've seen in people you've personally met. There is realism in Leiby's work that makes readers appreciate her efforts.

I instantly became a fan. That she's a Michigander only made this discovery that much sweeter. I had to know more about this amazing author. Does she have other published works? Has she written any novels? Info in her bio on the reverse of *Downriver* indicates she graduated from the University of Michigan (a hated school in my part of Michigan). She also received degrees from The Bread Loaf School of English/Middlebury College and the University of Alabama. Her short stories have appeared in publications such as *Fiction*, *New Orleans Review*, *The Greensboro Review*, and *Indiana Review*, among others.

I went online and dug deeper, learning Jeanne Leiby became a teacher, sharing her talents with students at the University of Central Florida. She won the 2000 Poets and Writers Writer Exchange. She served as fiction editor of *Black Warrior Review* and Editor-in-Chief of the *Florida Review*. In 2008, Jeanne took over as editor of *The Southern Review* at LSU in Baton Rouge, Louisiana.

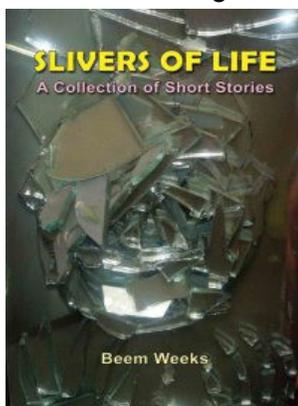
Oh, and if that's not impressive enough, while working as an intern at a publishing house, Jeanne Leiby became responsible for finding and publishing *White Oleander* by Janet Fitch—which just so happens to be one of my all-time favorite novels.



But then I saw it, there at the tail end of her Wikipedia page. On April 19, 2011, Jeanne M. Leiby was killed in an auto accident in Louisiana. According to police, Miss Leiby was driving a 2007 Saturn convertible with the top down. She was not wearing a seatbelt when she lost control of the vehicle, hitting a guardrail, before being ejected from the car. Doctors at a nearby hospital pronounced her dead on arrival.

That news kicked me in the stomach. I felt cheated. Here is this amazing talent from right down the road, and she's gone before I get the chance to discover her work. But I also feel cheated by Jeanne M. Leiby herself. Had she exercised a little common sense and worn her seatbelt, she just might still be here today, writing some brilliant prose that would make the rest of us writers jealous.

An amazing talent is gone from our midst, but her work remains with us. Do yourself a favor and invest in a copy of *Downriver* and see how good a short story can be.



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Check out this story and more in "Slivers of Life: A Collection of Short Stories" available on Amazon.

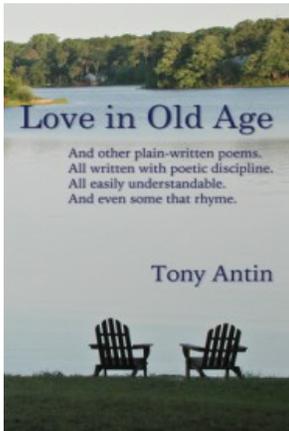


Putting words
On paper to
Express in part,
Thoughts from me
Right to
Your heart

Poetry Unleashed

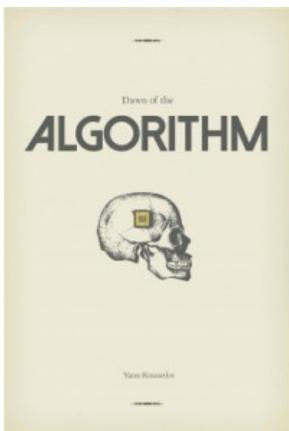
Wet With Ink (Current Flows)

Title: Love in Old Age
Author: Tony Antin
Type of Poetry: General
Release Date: May 26, 2015
Available: Amazon, Barnes & Noble



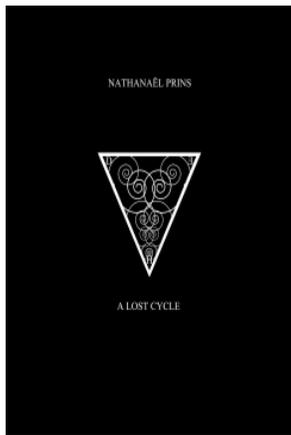
Blurb: If you, too, feel that most of what is published as poetry today has moved far away from what you enjoyed as poems; if you, too, are fed up with the pseudo-sophisticated and so often incomprehensible nonsense offered up today, then you will find great satisfaction in Tony Antin's introduction and his plain-written poems. They are clear, and they are written with poetic discipline. There are even some that rhyme! Each poem will pull your eyes smoothly through to the end and leave you saying, "Yes!"

With this book, Love in Old Age, Antin challenges the editors and academics who determine what is published now. To him, poetry is to writing what ballet is to dance. He contends that, to earn the rank of "poem," the work must have a structure, a word scheme that the poet declares with the opening lines and then adheres to. With poems ranging from death to country humor, Antin brilliantly demonstrates his beliefs.



Title: Dawn of the Algorithm
Author: Yann Rousselot
Type of Poetry: Sci-Fi Poetry
Release Date: May 30, 2015
Available: Amazon

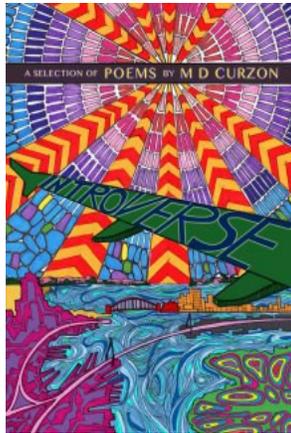
Blurb: Dawn of the Algorithm, Yann Rousselot's debut collection of poetry, is a bestiary of octosharks and dinosaurs, zombies and pathogens, mecha robots and common mortals.



Title: A Lost Cycle
Author: Nathanaël Prins
Type of Poetry: Spiritual
Release Date: June 15, 2015
Available: Smashwords

Abbreviated Blurb (For Full Blurb, visit Smashwords): The end of the earth is coming. The earth is falling apart and all its inhabitants are dying. But one man discovers what is truly going on behind all this.

The story is told through three different perspectives, all with a different theme. Themes such as: sin, death and suffering. The short story is written in a free verse poem style.



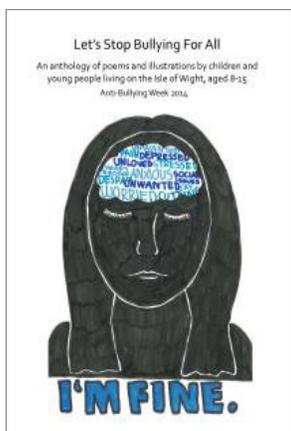
Title: Introverse
Author: M D Curzon
Type of Poetry: Contemporary
Release Date: June 21, 2015
Available: Amazon

Blurb: 'Introverse' is a visionary selection of poems by M D Curzon, the author of 'Anticipation' and 'Imaginary Friends'.



Title: In Unison
Authors: Geraldine Calucin and Elgene Zalamea
Type of Poetry: Collaborative
Release Date: June 24, 2015
Available: Smashwords

Blurb: This is more. A collaborative effort. An idea, a platform, a challenge. A book of two writers that showcases a meeting of minds, a situation wherein two people's thoughts coalesce.

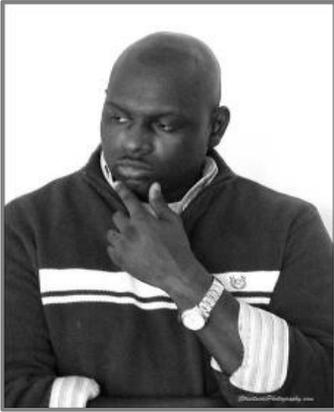


Title: Let's Stop Bullying for All
Author: Anti-Bullying
Type of Poetry: UK Youth Poetry
Release Date: June 26, 2015
Available: Smashwords

Blurb: The 25 shortlisted and 8 winning entries from the 2014 Anti-Bullying poetry competition based on the theme 'Let's Stop Bullying for all' are collated within this ebook, alongside illustrations from young people on the Isle of Wight.



Poetry Unleashed Featured Poet



Poet Kerry B
Website
Facebook
Twitter and IG @kerrybpoetry

In Issue 11, Vision Degrees Celsius, All Authors gives special spotlight to Poet Kerry B. Today we sent down to ask questions about his poetry, his adventures in Spoken Word, and what it is light to be recently married to a fellow poet.

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1. The theme for the July/August issue is Vision: Degrees Celsius. How do you think that applies either to the landscape of poetry?

Looking at the theme of this issue, my thoughts go to how poetry as a whole has become more fluorescent within the general population. We're now seeing poetry being performed on talk shows, commercials, etc. Only a matter of time where we as poets would be above what shows like Def Poetry Jam, Verses and Flow had initiated.

2. You ever heard the saying, "You can take the person out the South but you can't take the South out of the person?" Although I've lived in the Northeast for a while, my Southern roots still shine through, even in my own writings. This leads to my next question. How has being a product of the South shaped your character and poetry?

Being a product of the South had really shaped my character from the beginning. Growing up within the Bible belt, my poetry has encompassed spirituality. Being from the South, I was also exposed to the ugliness of racism. My poetry was my escape, my loudspeaker of what I wanted to say. Poetry is all about expression, so my writing spoke of what I lived and experienced.

3. How did you and your new wife meet? Do you believe the fact that you both are poets helps and even deepens the bond of your relationship?

My wife and I had connected via Facebook, since we were both from Birmingham and were poets as well. One night, she was driving back home from a show and needed someone to talk to her to keep her awake. So I called her, told her jokes and whatnot, all the way until she was safely home. I called her everyday after that...and now we're married. Our love of poetry was our foundation, and as we grew as a couple, we noticed we grew in our writing, doing collaboration pieces and hosting shows together. It's a beautiful thing.

4. Have you ever faced a situation where there was a lack of cooperation among your spoken word peers? If so, how did you address it and does it still go on today?

I could only think of one situation and that was when me and my wife had left an organization that was supposed to be a coalition of poets. Their platform was a great idea, but there was lack of focus on the members themselves. Me and my wife talked about it and left the organization. Of course, there was some negative feedback from some members of that organization. Both of us had addressed them, stating that it was nothing against them personal, it was a career decision for both of us. I hope it doesn't still go on today, for we are huge supporters of the poetry community.

5. Do you believe that all who write poetry should perform poetry? Expand on why or why not?

I believe all poets should perform their poetry at least a few times in their lifetime. Writing phenomenal poetry is one thing, but to hear the words come alive in front of you is a beautiful experience, for both the poet and the audience.

6. Is there a distinction between "spoken word" and "performance art"? If so, can you clarify for our reading artist and if one term carries one weight than the other?

There isn't much of a distinction between spoken word and performance art. Spoken word has truly grown to become a respected genre in the music community, and I think of spoken word in that form. Performance art to me is more acapella, where it's just the words themselves that dance in the ears of the audience.

7. In the literary world, some believe that there are writers who learn the craft and those who were born to do it. Why do you believe your talent is God-given?

I haven't had that much formal training within literature, especially within poetry. However, all the time, people come up to me, stating that my poetry is uplifting, educational, and inspiring. Our gifts and talents are meant to uplift others, not ourselves. As poets, we are tasked to share our testimony with others, and can care less how they respond. The point of all is that they've received our poem.

8. Tell All Authors more about your organization Kingdom Ink, regarding its purpose, members and outreach.

Kingdom Ink Entertainment started from an idea by me and my wife. Its purpose is to establish artists and entertainers, while enhancing and developing their craft, as well as promoting their talents to the world.

9. What is the biggest misconception others have about poetry in general?

I think the biggest thing about poetry that people have a misconception of is that they have to be "deep" to write a poem. That is entirely not the case. Each person carries a poem within them that is waiting to be written. The opportunity is there, but it's up to that person to pick up that pen.

10. Kerry, thank you so much for gracing us with your presence on All Authors. Before you depart, please share one of your pieces.

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"One"

We are one
As the bright sun
Gently kiss our vessels
As the trebles of the day gently play
The intro of another God-given day.
We lay, in an intimacy
That carries the legitimacy
Of forever...a time only mentioned with fantasies.
Breathing at the same tempo
As if the rhythm of life had simply slowed
Down to catch up to our eagerness to live.
We are one
A number that can't be undone
For it signifies the beginning of everlasting
As chocolate limbs continue grabbing between
Skin....and linen.
A living masterpiece...painted with the bright colors
Of love, over the canvass of simple Earth.
Birthed was the deliciousness of compassion
As the magic appeared vividly in our realities

That were falsely portrayed as dreams.
Onyx beings are we
As we become one with Egyptian cotton
Sharing the same slumber that our ancestors
Had for many centuries
As we share the throne as kings and queens.
Submitting to each other's majesty
As humble and simple as we were created.
We are one...
With a love forever young...
Just as anxious and full of vigor
As a newborn opening his eyes to the colors
Of the chapters of life.
Known to many as husband and wife...
That are started initially groom and bride....

To now...them.
Us.
We.
Singular words that describe the metamorphosis
Of couple....breaking from wrapped sheets
To a new day known as a covenant.
We are one...
As the bright sun....

Illuminate our eyes and our hearts
As we awake....to a new day....
As one.

Also experience Kerry B's poetry on Soundcloud!



Thank You!

For Checking Out *All Authors Magazine*

