

* Fiction Columnist

~Rick Chiantaretto <mailto:rick@facadeofshadows.com>

* Staff Book Reviewers:

~Pat McGrath Avery <mailto:patmcgrathavery@excite.com>

~Mayra Calvani <http://www.mayracalvani.com>

~Michelle Carter mailto:michelle_Carter3380@hotmail.com

~Carolyn Howard-Johnson <mailto:hojonews@aol.com>

~Talitha Kalago <mailto:traditionalevolution@gmail.com>

~Mary L. Meek <mailto:demetria24@aol.com>

~Violet Moone <mailto:shadoworchid4@tempting.com>

~Rita Porter <mailto:beepmybeep2@mchsi.com>

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want and need a quality book promo. To receive a quote, e-mail Paul at paulspromos@gmail.com or visit his [MySpace profile to view samples](#) of book videos he's already created.

Scribe & Quill's first quarterly issue of 2009 will be linked on the home page as well as available at our Zinester page. For previous issues, visit our [Archives](#) section. Our quarterly issues for 2009 will be Winter, Spring, Summer and Fall. The Web site is always under revision, so be sure to clear your cache and refresh your browser each time you visit.

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S & Q has an opt-in subscriber list of over 6,000. I hope we will not only keep our current subscribers, but build upon that base over the coming year. As the new year dawns, I want to thank each and every one of you for your subscriber-ship and submissions.

Now I present to you the 2009 journey of Scribe & Quill. ;-)

Questions? E-mail me at scribequill@gmail.com

Sincerely,

Bev Sninchak, writing as Bev Walton-Porter
<http://www.bevwaltonporter.com>
Editor/Publisher - Scribe & Quill

VISIT MY PROFESSIONAL WRITING CV & SAMPLE WORK HERE:
<http://bevwaltonporter.com/BevWaltonPorterCV.html>

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ANNOUNCEMENTS:  
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We are glad to deliver S & Q to our readers at no charge, but we appreciate any contributions made to show support for this endeavor. Become a patron of Scribe & Quill and help support the continued publication of this 'zine. When you become a patron, we will list your name on our Website and run a short personal profile of you in our zine as our thanks to you for your support.

Contributions may be made through PayPal by visiting <http://www.paypal.com> and sending your contribution to scribequill@gmail.com

Thank you for reading our magazine, and for your continued support.

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#### ADVERTISEMENT

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I have more than 15 years of editing experience and have edited more than 200 published novels and textbooks. Attention to detail, excellent knowledge of English. Fast and accurate. Can say what you mean, simply and clearly. No job too large, no job too small. <http://www.chinarice.org/editingservice.html>

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#### PUBLICATION SCHEDULE FOR 2009

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Scribe & Quill publication schedule for the remainder of 2009

Articles/columns/reviews due by: April 1

April/May - Spring issue

Articles/columns/reviews due by: July 1

July/August - Summer issue

Articles/reviews due by: October 1

October/November - Fall issue

Please note! As of January 8, 2009, Scribe & Quill no longer accepts poetry or fiction submissions.

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#### FEATURED ARTICLE:

On the Author/Illustrator Relationship

By Mayra Calvani <<http://www.mayracalvani.com>>

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For most authors, working with an illustrator for a picture book can be a thrilling yet stressful experience. Having created the imaginary world in their stories, authors often wonder whether or not the artist will be able to grasp the essence of the setting and

characters—not only physically, but tone-wise as well. After all, it is up to the artist to bring the story visually to life. Sometimes the artist may have a different idea for the artwork than the author, and this can create problems.

When working with the big publishing houses, authors hardly have any saying as far as the artwork goes. The art department assigns the illustrator who they think will be better suitable for the book, and that's that. With small presses, the author has more influence in the matter and often authors and illustrators work side by side. This, by the way, doesn't necessarily lead to a better book. It's okay for the author to indicate her vision for the book, but it's also important to allow the artist to be creative and do her part. Likewise, an illustrator should keep in mind the author's vision for the illustrations. Mutual respect and communication are essential in any relationship, and for authors and illustrators working together this is no exception.

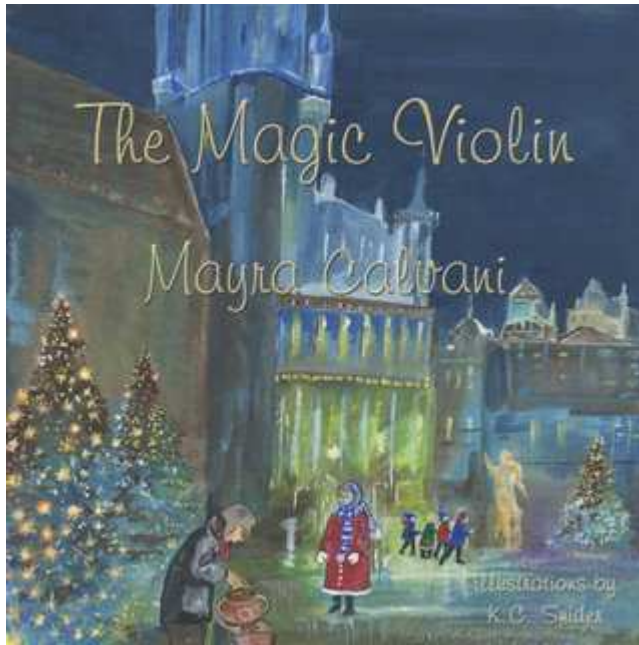


Of course, an author has the most control over the artwork when she hires an artist for a self-publishing project. This is how I found [Amy Moreno](#). Initially I was planning to self-publish my children's picture book, "The Doll Violinist." I had sent it out to dozens of agents and publishers, without success. I got some good comments on it, but apparently the editors and agents found the story's tone too quiet. Nevertheless, I had faith in my project and set out to find the right illustrator for it. My plan was to keep submitting while the artwork was being done, and in the event that I didn't have a publisher by the time it was finished, then I would publish it myself.

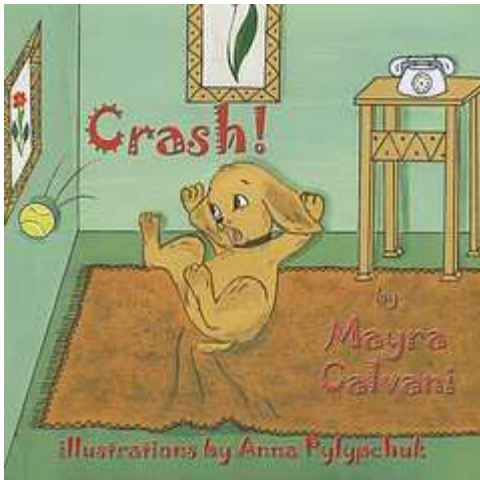
But to go back to Amy ... I spent about three months searching online, studying illustrator's styles and querying the ones whose work I liked to learn about their fees and work schedules. I found Amy via [ChildrensIllustrators.com](#). I believe in the sixth sense, and I instantly felt a connection to Amy's beautiful illustrations and renderings. I got in contact with her. To make a long story short, I sent her "The Doll Violinist" and she loved it. Amy's background in music and the cello was a huge plus, as I really wanted someone who would understand the musical aspect of the story. After I described her what I was after and we exchanged ideas, I asked her to send me a sample illustration, which she did. When I saw it, I was spellbound—in that single black and white drawing, she had perfectly captured the essence of the story. This was in the fall of 2006. She's still working on the illustrations, 24 in all. "The Doll Violinist" won an Honorable

Mention Award at the Writer's Digest Writing Competition and was one of 12 finalists last year at the ABC's Children's Picture Book Competition. It will be released by Guardian Angel Publishing in 2009.

Working with Amy has been a thrilling and rewarding experience as we see the story, setting and characters come to life. Since the story takes place in Victorian Europe, Amy has done a tremendous amount of research for the fashions and architecture of the time. She spent a long time studying the postures of violinists and even bought a violin so she could get the violin illustrations perfectly right! Thanks to her skill and vision, I know the book will turn out a beautiful product, whether traditionally or self published.



In the case of "[The Magic Violin](#)," however, it was my publisher, Lynda Burch of [Guardian Angel Publishing](#), who assigned the artist, though she asked my opinion before a decision was made. As soon as I saw [K.C. Snider's website](#) I was very impressed by her drawing and paintings, especially of horses, which are her specialty. So I accepted her suggestion to have K.C. illustrate my book. K.C. was wonderful to work with, even though I made a few mistakes initially. For one thing, I didn't give her enough information about the setting and especially about the correct postures for a violinist. This created some delay as I found errors in the artwork which had to be fixed. I blame myself for this. If I had spent more time communicating, I would have made both our lives a little easier. She was very open to suggestions and wanted me to be happy with the result, so I'm really grateful to her for that. Part of the reason for this lack of communication was my hectic schedule, so this has been a valuable lesson—to always give my writing projects 100 percent of my attention. Fortunately, I'm happy with the results and especially with the cover. I think K.C. captured something special, and even magical, in that cover.



For “CRASH!” it was a totally different story. The illustrator, Anna Pylypchuk, is only 16 years old and I ran across her by mistake! I contacted a group of friends here in Brussels, asking if they knew of a local artist who would be interested in doing a children’s book. A friend of a friend of mine got in touch with me, saying she knew a girl who could “draw around anything.” Now, at this point, I really thought “girl” meant college student. To make a long story short, it was not until after the young illustrator and I had exchanged two e-mails that she mentioned her age. She was not trying to hide it, either—she just assumed the person had told me her age in advance! I was really surprised and concerned, as I had never worked with a minor and wasn’t sure what my publisher would say. But her art was simply amazing! And when she did a sample illustration based on my story, I was hooked. She had captured perfectly the style and flavor of my story. I talked things over with Lynda Burch, also my publisher for this book, and she decided to give her a chance. To say that Anna was thrilled is the understatement of the century. She plans to illustrate professionally in the future, so to be able to earn credits at this early stage in her life, is awesome. We worked together for several months. In this case, I described in advance what I wanted for each illustration, but also made clear to her that she should let her own style and vision come through. For each scene she did a sketch first, then went on to color it once I had approve it. She was wonderful to work with, as professional as any adult could have been. When we finally met and she showed me the real artwork, I was astounded at her high level of organization, neatness and skill. I certainly hope to work with her in the future. I believe she’s a young artist who will go far.

Every children’s picture book is an adventure and I can’t wait to dive into the next one. Finding the right illustrator can be difficult, but once you do, it’s really a worthwhile and exciting experience. The secret? Mutual respect and communication.

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BIO:
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Mayra Calvani is the co-author of the book, "The Slippery Art of Book Reviewing," from Twilight Times Books. You can read our review of her book in this issue! Visit Mayra’s Web site at <http://www.mayracalvani.com>

“Maybe we need a Kid Whisperer,” I laughed. “Someone should walk up to him and hiss and point.”

“I’m not sure I’m getting an accurate picture here,” Anna Marie interjected. “What does this pack person point at?”

I looked at Karen. She shrugged.

“Um—you know, I don’t know what he points at,” I said.

“The air, I think.” Karen added, tentatively.

“And just by hissing and pointing, the dog will stop doing whatever irritating thing it’s doing?”

“Yeah, it’ll roll over on its back and let you rub its belly.”

The shrieks coming from the table behind us got louder.

Anna Marie turned to peer around the edge of our booth. “Having that kid roll over on his back and let me rub his belly isn’t exactly what I had in mind.”

“Well, you have to do it with authority,” I lectured. “You aren’t supposed to be angry. You want to show them that you are the dominant one by projecting calm and assertive energy. He says they don’t respond to emotion or negotiations like we do.”

The beleaguered mother picked up her wailing offspring and headed toward the door.

“Authority, you say?”

“Like this.” I poked Anna Marie’s upper arm with two fingers. “And then he goes ‘TSSSSST!’”

Anna Marie jumped and scowled, but the screaming kid passing by us in his mother’s arms, quieted.

The three of us sat in shocked silence for a second and then said in unison, “COOL.”

“Ooooh, Cesar!” Karen hooted.

“This is an incredible tool,” Anna Marie exclaimed. “Just think of the possibilities!”

“You think it would work with a man?” Karen asked.

We stared at each other in amused silence.

“A man whisperer?” Anna Marie’s voice was hoarse with excitement.

“Might need a bit more leash jerking with men,” Karen posited.

“Nope. Just project calm and assertive dominance.” I maintained.

“You think it’s that easy?”

“Sure.”

“Show me.” Anna Marie never accepts my theories right out of the box.

We looked around the restaurant. A good-looking young waiter was bussing a table a few feet away. Anna Marie and Karen turned back to me with expectant smiles.

“Greg?”

“Why not? He’s a man.”

“Give me a second to warm up.” I popped my knuckles, squared my shoulders and took a deep breath.

“Sheesh, you ’re winding up like Ebby Calvin 'Nuke' LaLoosh in *Bull Durham*,” Anna Marie sighed. “Just DO it.”

“I will, I will. You don’t get calm assertive dominance out of thin air, you know.”

“DO it,” they both breathed.

“Okay. Here goes.”

Our eyes returned to Greg who was absorbed in his work.

I jabbed two fingers into the air. “TSSSSSSSSST!”

Greg looked up, smiled – and hurried over to our table. “You all need another drink?”

We stared at him in astonishment.

“Uh—sure,” Karen bit her lip to keep from giggling. “Bailey’s?”

“Tea?” Anna Marie lifted her glass.

Greg looked into my eyes.

“Bailey’s is good.” It was a whisper.

noire? Where are our madcap romantic comedies? Why this abundance and popularity of magical-mystical-metaphysical-magical-realism movies?

Fads come and go in everything from fashion to films. Eras and ages enter and pass. Empires rise and fall. After all, all life is cyclic.

Day, night, day, night....
Yin, yang, yin, yang...
Liberal, conservative, liberal, conservative...

Spring, summer, fall, winter...
Birth, growth, death, decay...
Lights, camera, action, cut...

Mythmakers and storytellers are charged with explaining these cycles and making them relevant to the rest of humanity. After all, "Myths are the stories we tell ourselves to explain the world around us and within us."

This article will explore the current Archetype of the Magician, some mythic explanations of how we got here, and ways to use the Archetype in your own storytelling.

Archetypes are over-arching character types that we can relate to for guidance in our own lives. Some of the more popular archetypes in literature and media are the warrior, martyr, wise old one, orphan, mother, father, priest, prostitute, virgin, lover, healer, teacher and so on.

In the Wisdom teachings there are five dominant archetypes that actually become "ways" of interacting, no matter what the archetype. I call these approaches or paths to wisdom ArchePaths. They are the Warrior, Monk, Scientist, Magician and Lover.

In case it wasn't obvious enough from current box-office releases, please note that we are now in the era of the Magician ArchePath. Certainly other movies are being made, and some of them are quite good; some of them are quite popular. But there is a plethora of movies, TV series, and books based on some aspect of magic or metaphysics. Why?

Why are we seeing so much in the media about magic? About alternate realities? About unexplained phenomena?

It's always been all around us, but for the last couple hundred years in Western culture, science had reigned supreme and the magical (and religious and spiritual) was relegated to the woo-woo bin. Now the two strains separated in the Cartesian split of the 17th century are melding and these days we see physics explaining metaphysics.

One interesting pattern of cycles to explain this predominance of the Magician ArchePath is played out in the heavens. The precession of the equinoxes runs a complete cycle every 25,868 years. The Autumnal and Spring equinoxes (when the length of the day and

the night are equal) spend 2,155 years in each of the 12 signs of the zodiac: Aries, Taurus, Gemini, Cancer, Leo, etc. And by the way, this is astronomy the science, not astrology, although the configurations of astrology are based on the science of astronomy.

We are now entering the Age of Aquarius and moving out of the Age of Pisces. Before that was the Age of Aries and before that Taurus, Gemini, and so on.

Interestingly enough each of these astronomical and astrological Ages can be linked up with and is expressed by one of the ArchePaths.

Aquarius = Magician

Pisces = Monk

Aries = Warrior

Taurus = Scientist

Gemini = Lover

You can also think of these Ages as being expressive of or influenced by a particular *Zeitgeist* (German: *zeit* = time, *geist* = spirit) or spirit of an age, embodying the trend of the era.

Not too surprisingly the predominant stories of the particular Ages reflected the ArchePath of that Age. Let's start from the ancient past and move forward in a quick overview of how the ArchePath of an Age was expressed in the myths of that time. [Do note that much of this is based on Northern Hemisphere constellations and predominantly Western culture. Also note that the Ages overlap each other as one ebbs out and the other comes in. A period of about 250 years is said to ease up to the actual switch in the astronomy.]

Age of Taurus – the Bull. 4,000-2,000 B.C.E. +/-

This era is predominated by gods, goddesses, and icons centered around cattle. The half-man half-bull Minotaur, the Cretan bull vaulters, Hindu cattle worship, Krishna and the Cow-Girls (Gopis), the Egyptian cow goddess Hathor, the Horned Goddess of Europe and the Levant, the crescent moon symbol of horns, the Norse cow Audumla who suckled godlings and helped de-ice the first humans, etc.

The ArchePath here is the Scientist, grounded in reality, concerned with what's real, what can be manipulated with tools, what can be made useful. The innovations are in agriculture, brewing, architecture, metallurgy, domestication of animals, writing.

Age of Aries – the Ram. 2,000-0 B.C.E. +/-

It's the Heroic Age. The age of Ares, the god of war. It's about warriors, exploration, and progress. Besides the sturdy combative ram, symbols also include the Lamb of God and the sacrificial lamb. In Persian mythology the warrior-god Mithras slays the bull, signaling the end of an old age and the beginning of a new one. In the same way, the Greek hero Theseus slays the Minotaur and the Israelite mythic hero Moses destroys the Israelites' golden calf.

This Warrior epoch includes such fabulous stories and heroes as the Trojan War, Alexander the Great, Hercules, Ulysses, Peloponnesian Wars, Punic Wars, Biblical war-heroes Joshua and David, the Norse Valkyries, Beowulf, Bran the Blessed, Cuchulain, etc.

The ArchePath here is obviously the Warrior. The innovations are individuality, personal honour, and *noblesse oblige* ("To whom much is given, much is expected"). It's also about breaking up old patterns and opening up new lands. Concepts about democracy and individual rights gained a real foothold here in Periclean Greece around 500 B.C.E.

Age of Pisces – the Fish. 0-2,000 C.E.+/-

This age is about emotions, devotion, ideals and beauty. The two symbolic Piscean fish swim in water, which is always-always-always symbolic of the emotions.

In Western culture many stories from this era are centered around religions and ideals, as were many of the actions of this era. The three great monotheistic religions of the Book—Judaism, Christianity, Islam—flourished at various times and left their mark on our civilizations. Religious wars raged. Devotion to ideals was epitomized in the Arthurian legends and the age of Chivalry.

Each of the religions of the Book saw their mystical aspects grow into vibrant sectors that nourished emotional and numinous connections: mystic Christianity with Hildegard von Bingen, Saint John of the Cross, Saint Teresa of Avilla (a converted Jewess); Sufism in Islam with Rumi and Omar Khayyam; and the Kabala in Judaism with its rich panoply of symbolism and practice.

Some highlights of the era include religious art and literature, the Gothic cathedrals, Chaucer, the Arthurian legends, Warrior/Monks and the Crusades, the Knights Templar, Jesuits, the Inquisition, Crusades, Jihads, Catholic-Protestant wars, the Romantic Era and the Pre-Raphaelites.

The ArchePath is the Monk or ascetic and all that implies, including sensitivity, repression, fervent religiosity and fanaticism, incredible arts, music and Chivalric/Romantic love.

Age of Aquarius – the Magician. 2,000-4,000 C.E.+/-

The icon here is the water bearer: an androgynous being carrying a container of water. This Magician is often shown with one foot in water and one foot on earth, head in the air, pouring out water. The symbolism is about partaking of all the elements, about controlling the emotions (always symbolized by water, remember), about the conscious use of emotional energies to affect physical matter. The vase or container is often likened to the Holy Grail.

The ArchePath is the Magician. A magician is "a person who sees patterns where others do not see them and who creates patterns where they did not previously exist."

The Age of Aquarius is also said to be influenced by the Seventh Ray—one of the seven major aspects of reality delineated by the Hindu-Vedic-Theosophical system. The former Piscean era was ruled by the Sixth Ray which was about Idealism and Devotion. The Seventh Ray is about spirit into matter, magic and ritual, law and order.

Stories on this path include “Star Wars,” the many “Star Trek” series, “Ghost,” “Rosemary’s Baby,” “Phenomenon,” “Powder,” “Nightmare on Elm Street” and other horror movies, witchcraft movies and all the latest spate of movies about magic.

More examples would be Neo in “Matrix,” “Harry Potter,” “Resurrection,” “Excalibur,” “The Mists of Avalon,” “The Sixth Sense,” the telepaths in “Babylon 5,” Gandalf and Saruman in “The Lord of the Rings,” the three sisters in the TV series “Charmed,” of course “Buffy the Vampire Slayer” and in particular Willow the witch, “The Witches of Eastwick,” the death-magic of “Death Becomes Her,” the dimension-shifting of “Monsters, Inc.,” the magic-realism of “Like Water for Chocolate.”

Expressing the law and order aspect of the Seventh Ray are, well, all the “Law and Order” series which just keep proliferating. John Grisham movies. The popular old series “Murder, She Wrote” and the self-cloning C.S.I. series.

How many more can you list in the categories of 1) spirit into matter, 2) magic and ritual and 3) law and order?

It’s a law of physics that Form Resists Change: Isaac Newton’s first law of inertia observes that a body at rest tends to stay at rest and a body in motion tends to stay in motion. As the Piscean Devotional Idealistic era comes to a close, its adherents fight for its life via conservatism, fundamentalism and terrorism. We see this all around the world in real life as civilizations clash.

Despite the resistance of many people to this type of individual empowerment, many other people see the outcome of this new *Zeitgeist* as an opportunity for humans to become more god-like in their ability to consciously create new ideas and new things.

Our Frankenstein stories explore the down-side of this new ability: “Matrix,” “Terminator(s),” “Gattaca,” “Blade Runner,” “The Fly.”

The science headlines illustrate the (sometimes debatable) positive side of this creativity in cloning, DNA medicine, organ transplants, stem-cell research, unmanned surveillance vehicles, virtual reality, space travel and the internet. Some stories along these lines are “Contact,” “2001: A Space Odyssey,” “Babylon 5” and Kim Stanley Robinson’s trilogy, “Red Mars.”

If this all sounds more like science than magic just remember Arthur C. Clarke’s observation that “Any sufficiently advanced technology is indistinguishable from magic.”

Now supposing you want to do so, how can you as a story-teller work with this Magician ArchePath?

CHARACTER PROFILE OF THE MAGICIAN

STEPS & GOALS - Apprentice... Magician... Magus.

Each ArchePath progresses in three stages, as do most paths of initiation. A great example of the Apprentice is Mickey Mouse in Disney's "Fantasia," the Sorcerer's Apprentice section. The middle step of Magician is seen in many of the media examples listed above. The Magus, a superior master magician, is well represented by Obi Wan Kenobi of "Star Wars" and Gandalf of "The Lord of the Rings".

To incite your character to action you can have her working towards the next stage on the path, or impelled to do so by circumstance.

MISSION - Total connection between Above and Below, spirit into matter. Total control of forces in the seen and unseen worlds.

Think of Luke Skywalker in the swamps with Yoda, the young Karate Kid in training and Neo's coaches in "Matrix."

KEYWORD – Performance.

The Magician is always about the show, the drama, the performance. He's very ritualistic, precise. He has a flare for the theatrical and is a real showman.

DESIRES - Correct process, expected results, transformation, heaven on earth.

Taken to its extreme, this aspect evolves into the control freak, the anal-retentive. Or as someone once called it, anal-repulsive.

FEARS - Mistakes, lack of information, messiness, regression.

One way to cause dramatic conflict for the Magician is to throw their sense of order into disarray. Another way is to withhold essential information from them. After all, a magical formula is very like a cooking recipe or a software program and if you're missing an essential ingredient you can never create the final product.

STRENGTHS - Concentration, ritual, assessment, sees correspondences.

Recall the Magician is one who "sees patterns where others do not see them and creates patterns where they did not exist."

Your Magician is very focused, very right brain, sees the gestalt, grasps the big picture.

WEAKNESSES - Arrogance, rigidity, unconcern.

Well, just think Darth Vader.

STYLES OF ACTION - Ritualistic, correspondence = puts things together, on the dark side uses blood and sex to get energy, makes grand flourishes, pomposity.

STYLES OF SPEECH - Poetic, intricate, articulate, sleight of word. Joining words: mix, join, mingle, stir, marry, combine, mirrors. Magic words: cause-effect, affect, magic, miracle, patterns, transformation, metamorphosis.

SUGGESTIONS FOR DRAMATIC CONFLICT

Put barriers in the way of the Apprentice attempting to become a true Magician, or the Magician attempting to take the higher position of the master-Magician, the Magus.

For dramatic conflict have opposition against her progress, either from those at her same level who are jealous of her ambitions, those above who don't want a usurper in their midst, or those below who need help and don't want her to leave them.

Have your Magician character take the next higher position too soon, before she is ready for it ala Willow in "Buffy," or the sorcerer's apprentice in "Fantasia."

Put your Magician up against an Idealist from the Piscean age.

Have the Magician confront a Warrior.

Or a Scientist. An episode of "The Lost World" TV series once pitted Challenger the scientist against a witch; their discussions about magic and science well illustrated this conflict.

Like Obi Wan and Darth Vader, or Gandalf and Saruman, oppose two magicians, one on the side of Light, the other on the side of Darkness.

Give your Magician a very specific weakness from the list above and have them struggle to overcome their own internal problems.

Let your Magician be so successful they must battle with their own arrogance. You could do a play on the Midas touch story, where King Midas wished that every thing he touched would turn to gold and that was fine until supertime, when all his food turned to hard, inedible metal.

Use your imagination to juxtapose the fears-and-desires, strengths-and-weaknesses from the character profile and create dramatic conflict for your characters and your story.

So as you've seen, the abundance of movies and TV series about magic, magicians, multiple worlds, transformation and initiation may well have a mythic background and explanation. By plugging into the mythic aspect you can add power to your storyline and integrity, and authenticity to your characters.

Meanwhile, begin to become more of a Magician yourself by observing patterns where others might not see them and creating patterns where they did not exist.

May you both find and make incredible Magic in your own life and in your creative endeavors!

the needs and requirements of the publisher. When I wrote for me, for fun, or with free rein, my own style emerged effortlessly.

You have a style, it is unique and it is begging to be expressed. Can you see it in your everyday writing? Do you focus on it? Do you try to improve it? If I were familiar with you, could I read a piece of your work and know who the author was?

My style is conversational, and I think you'll recognize it in my articles. I prefer to write to you like I'm talking to you, and I often imagine myself having a directed conversation with my readers as I write. I want to relate to you. I want to make you laugh. I want you to have fun. I want us to become friends. Most of the time, I want you to be scared, because that is my method of seeing the true you.

I'm reminded of a movie I recently saw (over and over again): *The Dark Knight*. The Joker in the movie has a recognizable style. Something he said impressed me. "Do you want to know why I use a knife? Guns are too quick. You can't savor all the little emotions. You see, in their last moments, people show you who they really are. So in a way, I knew your friends better than you ever did. Would you like to know which of them were cowards?"

How do you relate to people? How do you get them to show you who they really are? How do you show them who you really are? In writing, we can only do that with our writing style.

One of the biggest problems I have with high school students is that they are so caught up in figuring out who they are, that they lose who they have already become. In this article I am calling attention to your style, but I don't want you to get so overly involved with thinking about it that you end up involuntarily giving it up. Thinking about style too carefully can result in perfectly mannered, forced writing, but there are a few things you can do to find, develop and use your style more effectively.

Of course, the first of those things is to write. The more you write, the more effortless and natural your style becomes I learned this lesson in my AP English class many years ago, when our teacher made us write for five minutes. It didn't matter what we wrote about, we just had to write.

Another thing I found that helps to improve style is reading. I found that as I read the *Twilight* series by Stephenie Meyer, and later, "The Host," that I started sounding a bit more like her. I loved her descriptions, and the first person point-of-view was something I seldom used, so I decided to give it a try. I now have a whole new world to experiment with. I've learned even more about myself as I've experimented. I discovered I like strong characters (something I learned to do in spite of Stephenie Meyer's influence on my writing).

Third, use words that come naturally to you. We should all strive to increase our vocabularies, but sticking to words you use in real life will help you avoid misusing, or using awkwardly, a word you are only using in order to sound impressive.

Remember that your goal is to communicate, and you want to do that as clearly and concisely as possible. Awkward writing takes readers out of the fictional dream you're working so hard to create. You want your reader lost in your prose, not distracted.

Cut down word usage. Don't say, "Make sure each sentence is composed as directly and simply as possible," when you can say "Make sure each sentence is as direct and simple as possible." It is not usually stylistic to sacrifice simplicity. Now, go back through this article and edit all my sentences... it will be good practice. After all, if you wrote this article, wouldn't you want it to sound like you?

Struggle to find the perfect words for your descriptions. Do research. There is great pleasure in knowing the name for things, and using those names. For example, "The knobby-kneed woman sat by the window tating a doily," is much more stylistic than saying, "The old woman sat in the corner working on something." Precision matters, but it is not a matter of filling a sentence with words; it is a matter of choosing the most accurate words.

Did you know the English language has at least 250,000 words? According to the people over at Oxford, that is more than most comparable world languages. We are lucky: we almost always have a synonym at our disposal. Buy a good thesaurus and make use of our language's heritage.

One of the biggest clues to our style can be found hidden behind our character's motivation. It should be no surprise that most characters in a horror novel are motivated by fear while romance characters are motivated by love, but what parts of ourselves are we including in these characters? Is there a hidden representation of your fear, or your love?

I invite you to take a stroll over to my website, www.facadeofshadows.com, to read the story called "Mind's Castle." I wrote this at a difficult time in my life, at a time when I felt trapped and confused. The character's motivation in this story stems from my own life, and the entire story is a metaphor for a challenge I was facing. It is perhaps my most personal work, and will illustrate the point I am trying to make perfectly. If I happen to leave any legacy on this world, I hope that "Mind's Castle" will be at the center of it.

I'd also invite you to take a look over your past writing. What do you do differently now? What do you like about what you have written? Think about how that applies to your style. Then, get out there and do it again.

If you are a part of a writing club or group, I have a great exercise you can use to increase your style, and learn more about the members of your group. Have everyone write a secret on a piece of paper (and yes, these can be whatever you want, from your secret

MC: You write in various genres—romance, mystery, romantic suspense, chick-lit. Which one is your favorite? Any themes which obsess you?

LW: Remember the song lyric, “When you’re not with the one you love, love the one you’re with”? That sort of sums up the way I feel about the various genres I write. They’re all my favorites while I’m writing in them. But what I really like to do is write outside the box, so I often write in a combination of genres (which can drive marketing departments batty.) “Talk Gertie to Me,” my first published book, was a combination of romantic comedy, chick lit and hen lit with a dollop of the paranormal, thanks to Gertie, the imaginary friend of one of the main characters.

As for themes, I’ve spent a good deal of my life as a designer, writer and editor in the consumer crafts industry. So many of my books draw upon those experiences. However, I don’t know that I’m obsessed with any themes so much as I am with characters. I’ve met a lot of quirky people over the years, and they’ve become the inspiration for some of the characters in my books.

MC: Tell us about your latest release. What is it about? What inspired you to write such a story?

LW: I think Dottie, one of the reviewers at RomanceJunkies, summed up “Love, Lies and a Double Shot of Deception” best when she described it as having “a bit of everything—wit, suspense, sensuality, romance and warmth.”

Life has delivered one sucker punch after another to Emma Wadsworth. As a matter of fact, you could say the poor little rich girl is the ultimate poster child for Money Can’t Buy Happiness — even if she is no longer a child.

Billionaire real estate stud Logan Crawford is as famous for his less-than-platinum reputation as he is his business empire. In thirty-eight years he’s never fallen in love, and that’s just fine with him — until he meets Emma.

But Emma’s not buying into Logan’s seductive ways. Well, maybe just a little, but she’s definitely going into the affair with her eyes wide open. She’s no fool. At least not any more. Her deceased husband saw to that. Besides, she knows Logan will catch the first jet out of Philadelphia once he learns her secrets.

Except things don’t go exactly as Emma has predicted, and when Philadelphia’s most beloved citizen become the city’s most notorious criminal, she needs to do a lot more than clear her name if she wants to save her budding romance with the billionaire hunk someone is willing to kill for.

Remember how I mentioned that my first manuscript wasn’t worth the trees that sacrificed their lives for it? That manuscript came about because 12 years ago I had a dream that wouldn’t leave me alone. Each night it unfolded like the chapters of a book. After several weeks I decided to write the dream down. The next thing I knew I’d given

birth to Emma and Logan and a 50,000-word manuscript that spanned three and a half decades. Over the years as I grew as a writer, I'd drag Emma and Logan out from under the bed and tinker with them and their story. I liked them too much to assign them to spend eternity with the dust bunnies. Eventually that 50,000-word romance that spanned 35 years was rewritten as a 95,000-word romantic suspense that takes place over the course of a few months. And that's how "Love, Lies and a Double Shot of Deception" came to be.

MC: How many books have you written? Have they all been released by the same publisher? Tell us a bit about your other books.

LW: I've written eight other books besides "Talk Gertie to Me" and "Love, Lies and a Double Shot of Deception" (which are both published by Dorchester Publishing), but so far those are the only two I've sold. The others, along with several proposals, are currently under consideration at several different houses.

In addition, I contributed a short story to a charity anthology that was released by Freya's Bower. All proceeds from the sales of "Dreams & Desires" go to a shelter for battered women in Florida. I have another short story in "Dreams & Desires, Volume 2."

MC: When working on a novel, what is your schedule like? How long does it usually take you to finish a full-length book? Do you edit as you write or do you cough up the first draft and leave the polishing for later?

LW: My schedule varies because I still work as a designer, so my days are often dictated by whether or not I'm on a design deadline. Some days I don't write at all; other days I write for eight or nine hours straight. It usually takes me around six months to write a book, but that can vary. As for editing, I both edit as I write and edit after the first draft is finished. I have two fantastic critique partners and an agent who's great at offering editorial input. So my manuscripts might go through several rounds of revisions based on what they have to say about them.

MC: Some writers listen to music or go for a walk when they feel particularly dry for ideas. Is there anything you do to spark your creativity?

LW: I'm a news junkie. When I see a news article, human interest story, editorial, or even a letter to Dear Abby that I feel has plot or character potential, I cut it out and put it in my IDEAS file. When I get stuck, I read through the clippings in the file and usually find something that triggers my muse.

MC: Technically speaking, what do you have to struggle the most when crafting a novel?

LW: Usually, I have a pretty good idea who the main characters will be, the opening scene, and how I want the story to end. The struggle is getting from A to Z in a way that will make readers want to keep turning pages.

is a musician's holiday
sharpen your nostrils on the edges
of that garden where the imagination
of water runs hotter & hotter
until at last you ooze cloudiness
you boom benevolence
the core of your bones breathes again.
And the triumphant tilt
of the Green Goddess of Poetry
evokes a silence
conjures a mass of sweet conspiracy.

The Tenderness of the Spaghetti

the sound:
of the first mouthful of the spaghetti
the main course smoothness
the swish of the strands of spaghetti
the chew of the spaghetti in the mouth
the way it slides—feet first
its delicate female anatomy
the way it stretches & falls
its tenderness: 'the tenderness of the spaghetti'
the way it plays symphonically on the palate
a field of clover spaghetti on my lap
O darling, darling, spaghetti on my mind
spaghetti sliding into home plate—safe, safe, run scored
dancing with spaghetti, O, dancing dancing with spaghetti
all my love & spaghetti
the loneliness of the long distance spaghetti
how do I love thee let me count the spaghetti
okay you guys, put up your dukes—let's have the spaghetti
I don't know why I love you like I do—it was just your spaghetti
reminds me of candles rainy nights in paris,&, ah, spaghetti
please, please be my spaghetti
please, or I'll die, I'll crawl in a hole & croak—
be my spaghetti

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BIO:

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RL Greenfield has lived in Los Angeles and Southern California since 1962.
His writings have been published in The Wallace Stevens Journal, Poetry/LA,
Tsunami, The Wormwood Review, Pharos (of Paris), The Minnesota Review and

I have every confidence that very soon I will be framing a beautiful shot of a large Black Crow. I will have it processed as an eight by ten print, perhaps in black and white. I have already purchased the matting and frame. I know just where I will hang you.

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BIO:
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Kathleen Walworth is a poet, essayist and fiction writer living and working in southern Ohio. Her work has been published in Releasing Times Magazine, Opium Online and Haruah. Her short story, "Conjuring the Feast," appeared in Salit Magazine.

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WRITER ROLL CALL:  
FEATURED BLOGS/JOURNALS

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A Writer's Life – Lee Goldberg http://leegoldberg.typepad.com/a_writers_life/
Blatherings – Debbie Ridpath Ohi <http://www.blatherings.com/>
The Bradford Bunch <http://www.thebradfordbunch.com>
Danger Zone Authors <http://www.dangerzoneauthors.com>
Denise Agnew, Romance Author <http://www.deniseagnew.com> AND
<http://www.myspace.com/deniseagnew>
Dennis J. McGowan <http://dennisjmcgowan.livejournal.com>
Elemental Musings <http://elementalmusing.blogspot.com/>
The Frugal Editor <http://www.TheFrugalEditor.blogspot.com>
LKH Blog – Laurell K. Hamilton <http://blog.laurellkhamilton.org/>
Mike's Writing Workshop and Newsletter <http://mikeswritingworkshop.blogspot.com/>
C.A. Milson <http://authorcamilson.blogspot.com/>
Mindy Phillips Lawrence <http://mindyphillipslawrence.blogspot.com>
Neil Gaiman <http://journal.neilgaiman.com/>
The New Book Review <http://TheNewBookReview.blogspot.com>
One Writer's Window <http://joanesh.wordpress.com/>
Pocket Full of Words – Holly Lisle <http://hollylisle.com/writingdiary2/>
Sharing with Writers <http://www.SharingWithWriters.blogspot.com>
Tess Gerritsen <http://tessgerritsen.com/blog/>

* Would you like to have your blog featured in this section? Send your blog URL and a short description to scribequill@gmail.com with WRITER BLOG in the subject line.

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FEATURED HUMOR:  
The Joys of Book Signing  
By Mary J. Breen <[mjbreen@sympatico.ca](mailto:mjbreen@sympatico.ca)>

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Book signings—so they say—are wonderful things. You get to promote yourself, promote your book, chat with your readers and feel like A Big Important Writer for a few hours.

Well, not always.

So, before you get too excited by a bookstore's offer to organize a signing for you, here are a few questions I wish I'd had the foresight to ask the last time I did one:

* What kind of advertising are you planning?

My recent signing was at a New Age bookstore. I guess they usually reach customers by telepathy since they'd done no advertising whatsoever. They assured me they'd *meant* to.

* Where will you be putting me in the store?

After I arrived, they scribbled my name on a scrap of lined paper and taped it to the bare wall near my head. This, I was told, was my "place." Also at my "place" were a tiny table along with a cracked dining room chair about an inch higher than the table. There I was, all ready to promote my book on the importance of women's middle years, looking like an unwelcome visitor at kindergarten.

* Do you have any copies of the book?

A good question, and one I had thought to ask beforehand. They said yes. It turned out they had two. Two. They'd *meant* to order more. I found a couple in the back of my car, thank God, but in the end, we had a surplus. Maybe this is why they'd chosen such a small table.

* Do you have heat/air conditioning?

You'll need to know what to wear. These folks in this store assured me it was usually toasty warm in their bookstore, but that day it was warmer outside in the November Ontario winds. I put my coat back on, and wished I hadn't spent money on a nice new Book-Signing Outfit. I also put my oven-mitt-sized driving gloves on, concerned about how they would affect my image as well as my penmanship. I needn't have worried.

* Does anyone ever come into your store?

Very important question. They told me Saturdays are always booming, and the lack of customers that day was because of the Santa Claus Parade. Problem was, the parade didn't start until five! During the two hours I was there, only 12 customers came in—I counted—and most were teenagers in search of incense and crystals. They didn't even see me. No one stayed very long, probably because of the cold. Then, two women over 40 arrived, and I thought: "Great! Here they come." But, being a good, reticent Canadian, I couldn't bring myself to call out, "Hi, come on over!" and they, being good, reticent Canadians, managed only shy smiles before they hurried past. Perhaps a tall, lonely woman scrunched behind a kid-sized table made them fear I was selling books about the perils of a second

childhood. Anyway, just when I was feeling the misery of the wallflower, one woman turned and came back. I was so relieved I probably gushed, but she wasn't at all interested in my book. She was selling progesterone cream. I have her card.

* Do you have good books to read while I wait?

This, of course, is the plus of bookstore signings. Since I had nothing to do and I had to pace about to keep warm, I got to browse their shelves where I found books on numerology, astrology, dream analysis, witchcraft, UFOs and the afterlife, as well as stress, reaching one's financial dreams and getting along with everyone from your partner to your cat. None about getting along with your local writer. But they had some interesting books on Buddhism, so the signing was a profitable venture in the end. I bought two books.

* Will you mind if I leave early?

After an hour and 50 minutes, I'd had it. I tore down their homemade sign, and packed away my special pen. I was already wearing my outdoor clothes. When I told the owners I was on my way, they were astonished.

So, take heed. If you want to have a fun and successful book signing, a little prep goes a long way.

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BIO:

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Mary J. Breen has been a freelance writer and editor for 20 years. She has published short fiction in Canadian Woman Studies, The Spillway Review, Flash Me, Other Voices, Mystery Authors, kaleidowhirl and Boston Literary Magazine as well as Amsterdam Scriptum, Fiction Attic, Baker's Dozen and Random Acts of Writing .

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ADVERTISEMENT

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DO YOU WRITE LIKE A LEO?
CAN YOU PLOT LIKE A CAPRICORN?
YOUR SUCCESS IS WRITTEN IN THE STARS!

"Sun Signs for Writers" (Writer's Digest Books) is the first book to harness the power of the zodiac to improve writing! Readers discover their writing strengths and weaknesses based on their astrological sign.

This unique and practical guide brings together the creative worlds of astrology and writing for an instructive guide that any writer can benefit from. Packed with exercises designed for each sign's tendencies, as well as examples of famous writers and their signs, "Sun Signs for Writers" will help writers of all genres — and astrological signs— improve their skills.

- * The only book to combine writing and astrology
- * Fun size and format make this a perfect year-round gift for writers
- * Sure-fire ways to beat writer's block
- * Advice on how to deal with rejection
- * How to give critiques and understand critiques coming from other signs
- * Writing exercises tailored for your creative style
- * How to use astrological signs to build the perfect foundations for believable characters.

Here's what reviewers are saying about "Sun Signs for Writers":

++ Midwest Book Review calls Sun Signs for Writers "A unique, revealing guide"

++ C. Hope Clark, author and editor of Funds for Writers says:
 "Bev Walton-Porter has created a genuinely fun book in Sun Signs for Writers. I read it in one sitting, a rarity in my busy and hectic world."

++ Author Barbara Ardinger, Ph.D. says: "Sun Signs for Writers is one of the most helpful books you'll ever find. Buy it, read it, and set it on your shelf beside The Elements of Style, The Transitive Vampire and the Chicago Manual of Style."

++ Ginnie Bivona, Director of Atriad Press notes: "...this is more than just another astrology book; I intend to suggest this book to every aspiring writer I come in contact with, it's got more useful suggestions, and concise information about how to make it in this industry than I have read anywhere else in a very long time. It's inspiring and informative, and personally I think it belongs on the shelf of every writer. It's that good."

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For more information or to peak inside the book, visit:

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ISBN: 1582974039

ISBN-13: 9781582974033

Format: Paperback, pp. 176

Publisher: Writer's Digest Books

Visit the Astrology for Writers website:

<http://www.astrologyforwriters.com>

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**FEATURED GUIDELINES**

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OATMEAL STUDIOS IS LOOKING FOR humorous greeting card ideas that appeal to a range of ages and interests.

TALK IT UP

Because these cards and pads are sent from one person to another as a greeting or message, they should read the way people really talk. When you write a line, imagine that you're speaking to a family member or friend. Then ask yourself: "Would I buy this card to send to these people?"

MAKE IT FUNNY

If you find yourself wondering whether a line is funny or not, read it to a few friends and see if they laugh. From a creative perspective, go wild! Keep in mind your target list of people you send cards to. Make sure your ideas would be good to send to them and general enough for lots of people.

A PICTURE IS WORTH 1,000 WORDS BUT YOU DON'T HAVE TO DRAW!

Cards that depend on a visual or photo are becoming a significant part of the copy we use. It is not necessary to draw your visuals, but you do have to be able to describe them in words. Keep it short and understandable. You can put your visual description in parentheses, under the idea on the 3x5 card.

WE NEED IDEAS IN THE CATEGORIES OF BIRTHDAY AND RELATIVE BIRTHDAY.

First of all visit our website at www.oatmealstudios.com to get a sense of our style. This will give you direction for your writing. There is no need to suggest visuals when you send your copy in, but feel free to if you have something good.

If possible send all your copy in a word attachment, easy to read, clear type, fitting about ten ideas to a page.

Last, but not least, send all copy to this e-mail address and I will respond with response times and further encouragement and direction.

Good Writing!

Dawn Abraham / Editor

We pay \$75 for each idea we purchase. Your ideas must be original.

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## FEATURED CONTEST

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First Prize: \$100 + \$2 per story entry up to \$200—the more stories that are entered, the bigger the purse!

Second Prize: a Rusty Axe game package (Includes Big\$hot, Real E\$state Empire and Battle Castles).

Third Prize: One Rusty Axe game (Your choice of Big\$hot, Real E\$state Empire or Battle Castles)

The Rules - To enter, send in your original manuscript of 5,000 - 15,000 words. Entries will be prescreened and rated by Judge Jennifer. The top five contestants and/or all contestants scoring 90 percent or better will move on to the prize round. Prize round rankings will be a combination of Judge Jennifer's score and Web reader rating!

Write in any genre! Just remember this is an open forum; romance and adventure are appropriate—porn and gore aren't. We can't edit your work, so make sure to proofread carefully before you enter.

All entries are due by April 15th—you should be able to remember that date! We will be releasing stories onto this website as they are submitted, approved and ranked. Authors retain ownership including the right to publish and compete with elsewhere. We will be happy to post a small graphic alongside your name, a short bio and a website link if you provide them. The only right we will reserve is the right to post your submitted story on the Rusty Axe Web site. Enter as often as you wish; just make sure the words originate with you.

Submit stories to story at rustyaxe.com (replacing at with the symbol @).

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BOOK REVIEWS  
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RATING LEGEND:

- **** Quills = Excellent
- *** Quills = Good
- ** Quills = Fair
- * Quills = Poor

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“Rainbow Sheep”  
Author: Kim Chatel  
Illustrator: by Kim Chatel  
Reviewer: Mayra Calvani (<http://www.mayracalvani.com>)  
Publisher: Guardian Angel Publishing, Inc  
<http://www.guardianangelpublishing.com/>  
ISBN: 1933090847  
Rating: \* \* \* \* Quills

<http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/asin/1933090847/scriquile-zine-20>

“Rainbow Sheep” is an original, sweet story about a little shepherdess called Genevieve and her flock of sheep.

Genevieve is troubled because it has rained so much lately that the sky is always grey. When she tries to get the attention of the rainbow, she sees that its colors have faded and that it is sad. It has lost its will to live and love, its passion for beauty and life. Only by regaining happiness will the rainbow shine again in all its glory. But how will Genevieve bring joy back into the rainbow's life? You'll have to read the story to find out, and also to find out how the little sheep end up being as brightly colored as the rainbow.

I found this to be an usual story with surrealist elements. Chatel's language is lyrical at times, blending beautifully with the soft fantasy elements of the tale. The story also has the tone and cadence of a legend. Another aspect I found most original is that instead of illustrations, Chatel uses sculpted wool to create the artwork. This technique is known as needle felting.

I found myself engaged all through the book not only with the story, but also with the interesting wool figures. The colorful little sheep will be loved by children and the underwater scenes are especially bright and lovely.

“Rainbow Sheep” is a great way to introduce kids to this new craft. At the end of the book, you'll find descriptions, demonstrations and a glossary on needle felting. This is a children's picture book that will be enjoyed by adults and children alike, and one that will make a valuable addition to any library or school bookshelf.

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"Scranton: The Electric City"

Author: [Alyssa Amori](#)

Reviewer: Talitha Kalago ([traditionalevolution@gmail.com](mailto:traditionalevolution@gmail.com))

Publisher: Tribute Books, Archbald

ISBN: 9780979504532

Rating: \* \* Quills

<http://www.tribute-books.com/minicart/products.html#Scranton>

“Scranton: The Electric City” is a book of photographs depicting the Pennsylvania town of Scranton. The photographs, taken by [Alyssa Amori](#), are placed in a collection gathered with the intent of sending the book to Scranton born soldiers serving overseas to remind them of home.

The photos are organized into loose categories, such as “Downtown Scranton,” “New Additions,” “Nay Aug Park” and “Attractions” to name a few. The whole book is in full color. Most of the photos take up a full page although others are occasionally broken up between two and six images.

Unfortunately, my advanced review copy was devoid of any text, though I believe there is space for an introduction and a detailed index, which would be a fantastic addition to the volume. This book fits in nicely with my growing collection of photography books.

Overall I found the author to be a competent photographer with a good understanding of framing and lines. The images are, however, very simple. Little artistic risk was taken. Apart from a very small number of photographs taken at night, all of the images were shot on sunny days, usually from street level. This makes the book an excellent visual record of the town. However the images are the type you would expect to see on the wall of a historical museum or a travel brochure, not an art gallery.

My favorite image by far is in the “Attractions” section and is a full-page photo of a steam train. The lines and color are breathtaking. It is the standout image in the book.

The photo that most made me want to visit the town itself was the image of the fly walk in the “Nay Aug Park.” The overall photographic appeal of the town is quite high. This book presents it as a lovely place to visit.

“Scranton: The Electric City” will appeal mostly to previous residents of Scranton, to holiday goers in the area and to soldiers who are missing home. [Alyssa Amori](#) would like to see a copy of her book in the hands of every Scranton-raised soldier serving overseas. I would too. We all need a piece of home.

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“The Slippery Art of Book Reviewing”

Author: Mayra Calvani and Anne K. Edwards

Reviewer: Mindy Phillips-Lawrence ([mplcreative1@aol.com](mailto:mplcreative1@aol.com))

Publisher: Twilight Times Books (<http://www.twilighttimesbooks.com>)

ISBN: 1933353228

Rating: \* \* \* \* Quills

[http://twilighttimesbooks.com/SlipperyArt\\_ch1.html](http://twilighttimesbooks.com/SlipperyArt_ch1.html)

Going by its name, you’d think “The Slippery Art of Book Reviewing” was only for those who wish to review books. Not so. On the back cover it says “If you’re an author, publisher, publicist, bookseller, librarian or reader, this book will also bring to light the importance and influence of book reviews within a wider spectrum.” How perfectly stated. This book serves as a ready reference point for the experienced and novice reviewer as well as for anyone interested in what a good book review says and means to a world of readers and writers.

The book is well organized. With an excellent foreword by James A. Cox of Midwest Book Review, it starts its educational process before the first chapter. Next, the well thought out table of contents is arranged into three sections: (1) The Art of Reviewing,

(2) The Influence of Book Reviews and (3) Resources. At the end, a brief appendix offers a sample of a model press release.

Part One starts with the Five Keys to Being a Good Reviewer: (1) Command of language, (2) clarity of thought, (3) honesty, (4) objectivity and (5) tact. Pages 29 through 40 discuss how to achieve each of these qualities in written reviews. The book goes into the process of reviewing both fiction and nonfiction work. For fiction, it takes reviewers through a series of questions to ask about the book related to plot, narrative flow, pacing, characterization, dialogue, description, symbolism and allegories, point of view, theme, time and atmosphere and spelling and grammar. This section not only tells good reviewers what they need to know but also instructs writers on the quality of work for which publishers are searching.

“The Slippery Art of Book Reviewing” includes several sample book reviews—both the good and the bad for comparison. There is also a discussion and examples of the difference between a book review, a book report, a critique and a press release. Included are sections about making money as a reviewer, ownership and print rights, starting a book review site and dealing with review editors, authors, publishers and publicists.

Part Two talks about the influence of book reviews on libraries, bookstores, publishers, authors, publicists, book clubs and readers.

Part Three is a list of resources separated by genre including Web sites to post reviews, print review publications and online review sites and publications.

Authors Marya Calvani and Anne K. Edwards have done a lovely job with this book. If you intend to write, publish, promote or deal with books in any meaningful way, “The Slippery Art of Book Reviewing” should be on your bookshelf. It is an excellent resource.

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“Carpe Demon: Adventures of a Demon-Hunting Soccer Mom (Book 1)” by Julie Kenner  
Reviewer: Violet Moone ([shadoworchid4@tempting.com](mailto:shadoworchid4@tempting.com))

Publisher: Jove

ISBN: 0515142212

Rating: \* \* \* \* Quills

<http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/asin/0515142212/scriquile-zine-20>

Sometimes we need to just sit back and take a break. Dive into a good book that humors us, has something that we can agree with and relate to—in this case, family values—and has that dash of mystery that keeps us compelled to read more, that drives us to turn the next page and see what's ahead.

“Carpe Demon” is a delightful breath of fresh air in the demon genre. Kate Connor is a demon hunter or...was. She was strolling through the local Wal-Mart (the pet food

section, to be precise) and suddenly she's thrust into a world she had long since forgotten. Demons, spells, the side of the Catholic Church she'd pushed aside for a family, has suddenly caught up with her. Plus, she has to help her husband with looking as fabulous as possible to jump ahead in the even more cutthroat world of politics! Even one thing out of place... like, oh...say...the demon under the counter, and the whole thing could be shot. So, hopefully hiding it well enough should fix it until she can call in some higher help.

Hopefully. Ah, the good ol' days when the church did it for you... now gone. Here's hoping the neighbors don't notice the demon wrapped in a tarp.

Finding her son a daycare to stop bugging the neighbor? Check.

Helping her husband advance his political career (equipped with last-minute perfect dinners)? Check.

Taking her daughter to whatever start-of-school social event? Check.

Saving the world while remaining inconspicuous? Check.

“Carpe Demon” is a wild ride filled with wit and humor, pitfalls that will have you laughing out loud and twists and turns that have you begging for more.

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“The Clock Made of Confetti”

Author: Michael Salcman

Reviewer: Sarah Sweeney ([sesweeney@loyola.edu](mailto:sesweeney@loyola.edu))

Publisher: Orchises Press

ISBN: 193253511X

Rating: \* \* \* \* Quills

<http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/asin/193253511X/scriquile-zine-20>

“Is it better to be dumb/and a painter or blind and a poet?” This is a question Dr. Michael Salcman echoes from Leonardo in “Ut Pictura Poesis,” a poem from his first collection, “The Clock Made of Confetti.” This impossible question exemplifies the inquisitive tone of Salcman’s collection as he delves into a myriad of themes and explores the boundaries of his own comfort level, at times even exceeding the reader’s set level of comfort. While the themes themselves are not unique, including art, love and science, the way he weaves them together to emphasize each other.

Salcman’s unique heritage and his primary occupation as a neurosurgeon influence his style and themes in “The Clock Made of Confetti.” Much of his work includes images utilizing medical jargon. Though poets have done this before, the effect has been, for the most part, to emphasize the poet’s lack of knowledge and authority in that field. The

words roll off Salcman's tongue—or pen—and fit flawlessly into the phrases chosen to compose his poetry, such as in “The Sea Horse and the Anchorite”:

In a cross section of the brain  
memory rides in on a sea horse—*hippocampus*, a gray swirl  
smaller  
than a newborn's thumb, a tribute to his beauty and shape.  
All things alone are now connected, wired or wireless—  
even the anchorite in his desert carries the sea horse  
on his screen, bathes in the same sea water, dreams with his eyes  
wide open, sees the eggs float out like air bubbles on a wave.

It is clear Salcman knows exactly what he is describing and just how much a sea horse and the hippocampus are alike. It is natural for Salcman to say that “memory rides in on a sea horse” because he knows the brain intimately and therefore has the authority to make such comparisons. Then there's “*hippocampus*,” a medical term that is emphasized further by italics, carefully balanced by, “a gray swirl smaller/than a newborn's thumb.” Simple, but poetically effective.

Another example is “Perfect,” the first poem in this collection. This carefully crafted poem's subject and jargon remain in the medical world, as purely medical terms are abundant with scientific metaphors for the idea of perfection Salcman is trying to convey:

with blade and hot smoking wire,  
from just in front of an auricle  
to just above a brow, and now, now  
no longer looking in but looking out  
at the soul propped up in bed

The words are carefully balanced between science and spirit, each working off the other to create deeper meaning. The reader does not necessarily need know what “an auricle” is in order to understand what he is trying to say.

Salcman does not stay just with what he knows and is comfortable writing either. He explores and attempts to change his style. While some are a success, others, unfortunately, are left wanting. Several in his eight poem series about Eakins' portraits, “The Gross Clinic” and “Portrait of Walt Whitman” for example, come across as more prose than poetry, despite the prose retaining a soft lyrical quality: “Back from Paris and already 30, Eakins wishes to make/a splash. In his great medical machine, Samuel David Gross/of Jefferson College stands as brown as an Amsterdam brick.” For the most part, the poeticism is due to the use of enjambment and some of his unique descriptions. Without these being used, these lines are merely sentences describing several portraits Eakins painted.

“Be Not Afraid,” a poem about the best way to survive an anaconda attack, while seeming to be outside his realm of authority, indicates playful tongue-in-cheek at work. With vivid descriptions, the reader gets drawn in and is entertained by a character who

lays down and allows an anaconda to “suck on your toes/like a green lover.” Salcman’s quip at the end, directly addressing both the reader and the character being devoured by the anaconda, who may have, at this point, become one, gives the reader a quick peek at his sense of humor: “Oh yes,/you did remember to carry a knife/didn’t you?”

This first collection is an easy and enjoyable read, even for those who tend to struggle with poetry, while maintaining the ability to please and surprise some of the more weathered poetry readers. Although many of his poems reside in the past, Dr. Salcman’s use of current medical terminology is one of the ways he brings the reader back to the present and links the two. He shows us, in “Ut Pictura Poesis,” as he does in several of his other poems, that everything is interconnected. He concludes “Ut Pictura Poesis” with a thought-provoking answer to the choice between being a blind poet or dumb artist. This answer exemplifies his inquisitive focus in showing that even though he knows how everything connects, yet still retaining its separateness, he does not know why, or where these connections leave our identity: “Not much of a choice today, I think/when pictures make music/and words paint scenes;/across the great divide of eye and tongue,/how does the self hold on?”

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BIO:  
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Sarah Sweeney lives in Baltimore, MD and interns at the Circuit Court in Baltimore.

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