

FASHION

Dreams

How to Become
a Model

Top-9 Must read
for this Spring

INTERVIEW WITH
AUTHORS

Fashion | Life Style | Designer

Model
Lifestyle

All you need to know

FEB 2023

Fashion Model
Jugnu Pandey

COLLECTION



TRENDING FASHION



Models Lifestyle

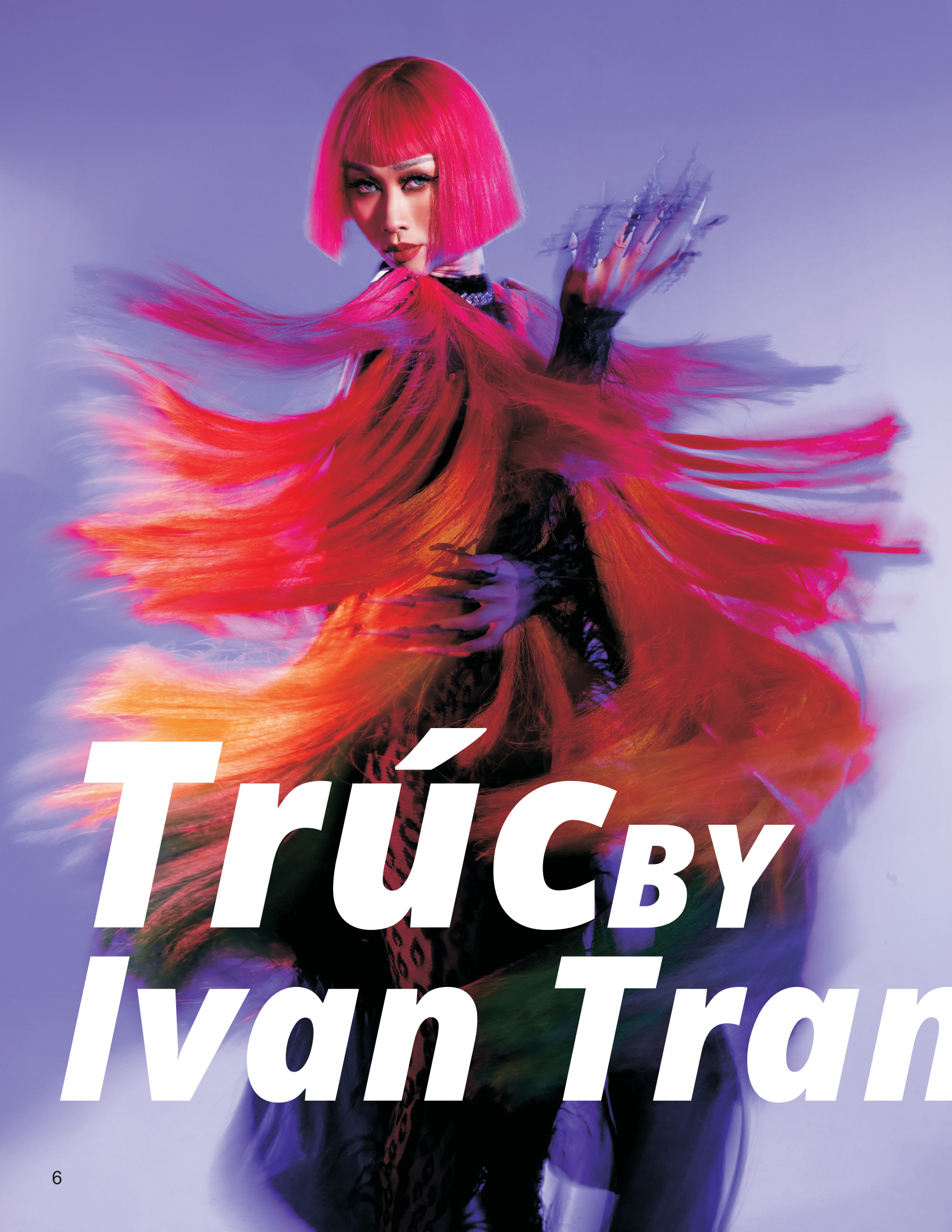
Modelling is a career that involves skills that can give you poise and confidence. In this career, you get the opportunity to travel to new places, meet creative professionals and earn a handsome income. Given the competitive nature of this career, however, you should be well-prepared before entering this profession. In this article, we explore how to become a model, what they do and what skills and qualifications they need. What does a model do? A model uses their physical appearance to help a company advertise a product or to help an artist create or display a work of art. A model might work with a photographer to create fashion pictures or walk down a runway to introduce a fashion designer's latest clothing line. Artists often hire models to pose for them while they draw, paint or sculpt. Companies hire models for advertisements and marketing campaigns.

EDITOR'S LETTER

Everyone wants to look good and some definitely want to flaunt it too. Modelling today is not restricted to the ramp alone. Whether print, product promotion or ad films, all fields demand good looking models to complement their products.

The fashion industry is one of the most polluting industries, and one of the most energy and raw material intensive. For this reason, and in spite of the tenuous advances that are already being introduced, 2022 will be the year in which companies will have to leave their promotional and advertising initiatives to three, replacing them with really significant actions that will even exceed what consumers are already demanding today. In this way, the definitive transformation of the industry towards a new sustainable model will be promoted.

Liba Khan
(Editor Fashion Dreams)



TrúC BY Ivan Tran

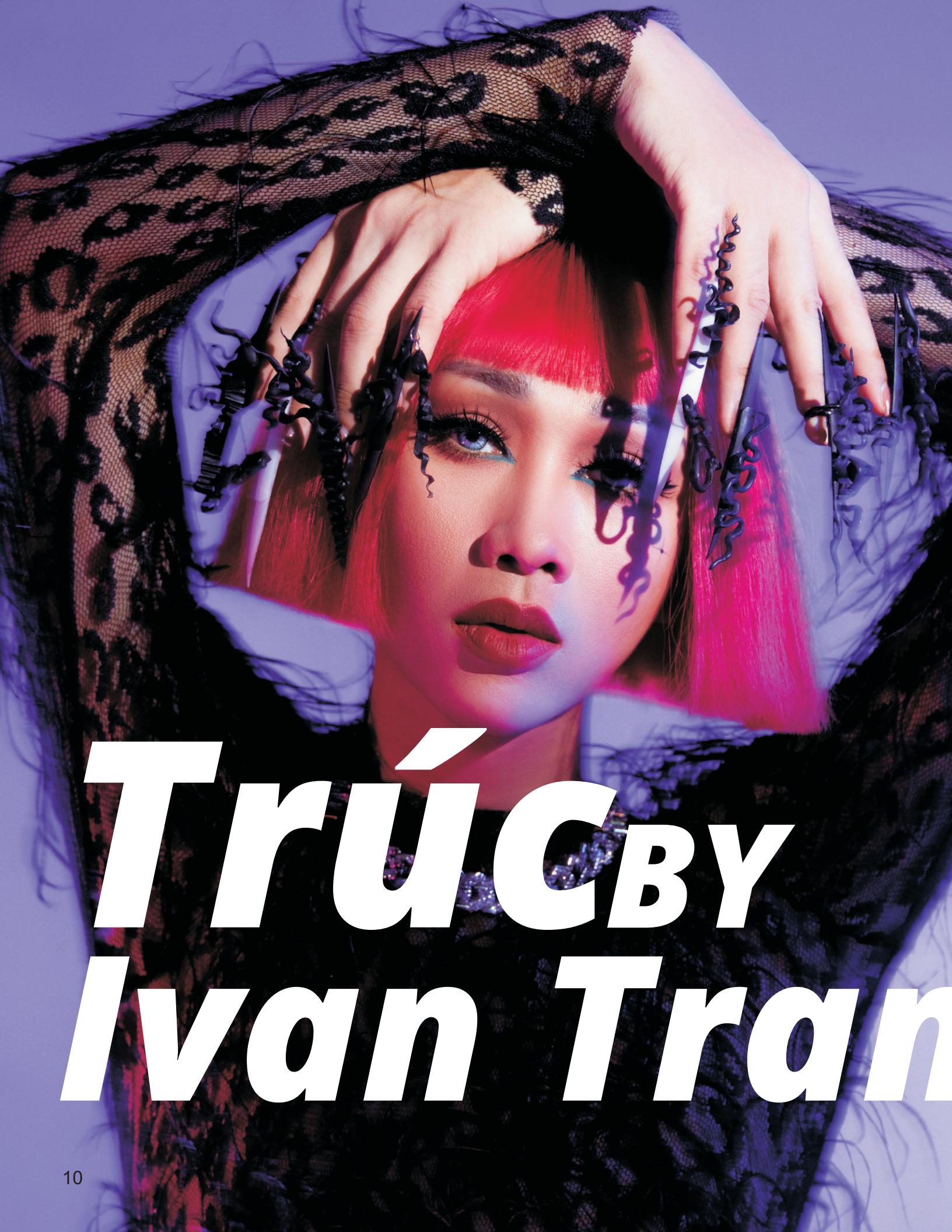




Trúc BY Ivan Tran

Neha Agarwal
Fashion Model





TrúcBY Ivan Tran

Priyanka
Fashion Model





MECHANIEK: LOST PARADISE

BY AUTHOR JC COMPTON

JC self-published their first series, Undertakers Inc., an LGBTQ+ all-inclusive vampire romance series, in 2021. In 2022, they joined Spectrum Books Publishing and released *Mechanik: Lost Paradise*, a post-apocalyptic LGBTQ sci-fi steampunk novel set in a world ruled by mechanics. When JC is not writing, they are usually cooking for themselves and their spouse.

ABOUT THE BOOK

Mechanik: Lost Paradise is a post-apocalyptic LGBTQ sci-fi steampunk novel set in a futuristic world ruled by mechanics.

In the distant future, in a world ravaged by a toxic war, mechanics are now the ruling class. Taliesin is a peaceful fisherman on the isle of Ethia, bearing only a large scar on his forearm from the toxic rains that ravage the planet. One day, he is caught up in a toxic storm and saved by the renegade mechanic Merrick. They fall in love and find a tropical paradise they name "Paradise Island". Merrick then brings Taliesin back to Ethia, promising to return after fixing his mechanical sailboat. If they were to be separated, they vow to meet again on "Paradise Island", but Merrick never returns. After hearing that Merrick may have been arrested for piracy, Taliesin attempts to board a mechanical galleon to the city and a mysterious man offers him to play the role of the lost prince and pretend to marry his own son in exchange for Merrick's freedom. Little does Taliesin know that memories will resurface, confirming he was actually the lost prince, the son of the man who ordered the kidnapping of Merrick as a child and the murder of his mother. The most important theme in the story is true love, the sort that survives even lies and manipulation, and how love in itself is self-sustainable. We also see some not-so-good characters change because of love. The story ends on a cliffhanger: what will happen to Taliesin, Merrick, Nex, Goram, and Toweren thereafter? Find out in the next volume in the series, coming out later this year.

Get your copy of 'Mechanik: Lost Paradise' today. Connect with Author JC Compton below.

twitter.com/jccompton5 [instagram.com/jccomptonauthor](https://www.instagram.com/jccomptonauthor) [jccompton.allauthor.com](https://www.jccompton.allauthor.com)



THE AUTHOR

JC is the non-binary, French American author of LGBTQ+ fantasy, sci-fi, and paranormal romance novels. Born and raised in France, they grew up in a multicultural environment which has shaped their passion for meeting new people from all around the world. Home was filled with English classics of

literature and poetry such as books by Edgar Allan Poe, Emily Brontë, or Robert Browning, science fiction novels by Isaac Asimov, and JC also enjoyed the French classic authors Honoré de Balzac, Emile Zola, or Victor Hugo, and fantasy novels by C.S Lewis, Anne Rice, and Tolkien. Literature, poetry, the beauty of words, and the romantic beauty of JC's hometown on the coast all seemed to complement each other, forming an auspicious environment for creativity to blossom.

A shy and quiet kid, JC began to write their own stories at an early age, both in the form of novels and graphic novels, later preferring the novel format because they could express more in the same number of pages. They naturally followed the literary program in their high school, focusing on literature, philosophy, and foreign languages then studied the English language in the USA and East Asian studies and history in Canada.

A world traveller passionate about languages, JC is fluent in French, English, and Japanese, and has travelled to many countries. Their most unforgettable journey was to India, sparking their passion for the Indian culture and languages.

THE INTERVIEW

WITH AUTHOR J C COMPTON

Q: What was your first thought when you started writing and when?

I started writing as a child because reality was 'not enough. I needed to create always more beautiful, more magical worlds. My lack of interest in contemporary novels was criticized by my teachers in school, who deemed me 'too creative'.

Q: What do you like to write about the most?

Of course, I like writing about themes that are dear to me, like true love, but I also enjoy creating characters who are the opposite of me and imagining how they would interact with others and how their story arc would go.

Q: What does your book emphasize?

My book is about finding one's truth in a confusing world where we are constantly being manipulated by the media, by marketing, etc.

Q: What book or childhood author had the greatest impact on you?

The one book I read and reread the most as a child was *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe*, by C. S. Lewis. I had an old wardrobe at home, so it seemed like I too could go to Narnia! The imprint this book left on me is that there are no limits to the worlds you can write about and that you can create fantasy even from dull reality.

Q: What is the most unethical practice in the publishing industry?

There are many, and many marketing tricks intended to deceive the readers. Many publishers are looking to publish LGBTQ memoirs or real-life experiences, to showcase us as objects of curiosity, but few care to publish us as fiction authors. After reading what a few literary agents were looking for, I stopped querying and simply published my own books, but I eventually found a publisher who was a match for what I wrote. My publisher, Spectrum Books, publishes multi-genre LGBTQ+ novels, where many orientations can be represented. They can reach a much broader audience.

Q: Does writing energize or exhaust you?

Writing is as essential to me as breathing. I experience great heights when writing a new book, and great lows when it is complete. But that's okay because inspiration soon comes back, and I write a new book!

Q: What have been some of the most exciting changes you have seen with regard to support for LGBT youth and what do you hope to see in the future?

The LGBT youth is awesome. Because representation is much better nowadays, they know exactly who they are, and they say it out loud. But they are faced with rising pressure from anti-LGBT groups who seem all-powerful

because of their lobbies. This is why us LGBT people of all ages need to keep standing up, writing, singing, representing, and making our voices heard.

Q: We hear stories about exclusion, harassment, bullying, and other struggles of LGBTQ youth. How do you deal with the critics?

As a non-binary person, I face criticism and bullying not only from non-LGBT people but also within the LGBT community. There are still some members of the community who say that people like me 'don't exist, that we are closeted transgender people, or that it's not possible to identify as more than one gender. I see gender as a spectrum, on which I know exactly where I stand. I have identified as a non-binary for over twenty years, and I've had plenty of time to think about it! Outside of the LGBT community, I get criticized for being a female-bodied person refusing to dress in a feminine way. There is still the expectation that women and/or female-bodied people owe beauty and femininity to others, and that their only value lies in their looks.

Q: Do you try more to be original?

Originality is the most important thing to me. I'm not out there to write the LGBT version of *Twilight* or *Fifty Shades of Grey*, but something new and unique. People will like it or not, depending on what they are looking for.

Q: Do you think someone could be a writer if they don't feel emotions strongly?

There are so many different genres of books that anyone can write a book, however strongly they feel emotions. For example, some romance readers prefer platonic or even asexual romances, while others expect explicit, sexy, stormy love stories. There is a writer for every reader out there.

Q: What is the signature quote that you'd like to share with the readers?

"People who say it cannot be done should not interrupt those who are doing it". I've always been fearless, and all my life people have told me "you can't possibly do it", to which I responded "watch me do it".

Q: What does literary success look like?

It's writing a book, and then writing the next book. I don't look at how many books I sold before writing a sequel. I know people will read it, and some will like it. To me, that's success.

Q: How do you feel about being featured in

I am very happy to be featured in the Pride month edition of *DE MODE*, and I hope to be a source of inspiration for LGBT youth, and future writers!



YOU'LL BE FINE

BY AUTHOR JEN MICHALSKI

Writing a novel that opens with the death of a parent is not exactly a comedy at heart: "Although Michalski says this is a family comedy, there is a tragedy at the heart of it. What she found in writing this novel and the one on which she's currently working is that you can't separate levity and tragedy, just like in real life. You might be at the funeral home, but something funny happens there, and you laugh and your family laughs and it's a moment you'll share, one that will warm your heart during those gutting periods of grief. She wanted to capture that duality, even if it meant the book is difficult to characterize as one way or another."

ABOUT THE BOOK

After Alex's mother dies, she takes leave from her job as a writer for a Washington, DC, lifestyle magazine to return home to Maryland's Eastern Shore. There, she joins her brother Owen, a study in failure-to-launch, in sorting out their mother's whimsical and often self-destructive life. Alex has proposed to her editor that while she is home she profiles Juliette Sprigg, her former high school fling, owner of a wildly popular local restaurant, and celebrity chef in the making. While working on the story and trying for a second chance with Juliette, Alex meets Carolyn Massey, editor of the town newspaper. Matters get complicated when Carolyn begins to show more than a professional interest in Alex, and Alex's Aunt Johanna, who has transitioned to a woman, comes from Seattle and reveals a family secret. Alex may have to accept her family for who they are rather than whom she hoped they would be, and just maybe apply the same philosophy to her heart and herself. Named a "Best Small Press Book" by BuzzFeed, *You'll Be Fine* "has plenty of heart" according to Kirkus Reviews and is "[A]n enjoyable story about an adult trying to grow up."

Michalski admits with 'You'll Be Fine' she was determined to write a family comedy and not a family tragedy, as in her previous family novel, *The Summer She Was Under Water*: "I'd noticed over the years, at readings or wherever I'd meet people who'd read my work, they always seemed surprised that I was funny in person, I mean, so much so that they'd tell me! And it bothered me that if you've only read my previous novels, you'd think I was this serious person when I don't see myself that way at all. I love laughing and making people laugh."



THE AUTHOR

Like most writers, as soon as Jen Michalski started writing, she couldn't stop. She remembers when she was seven her mother folded a piece of paper into quarters, making her a "book," into which Jen wrote about her birthday party. It was her first novel, and she's been writing them ever since---on the

backs of discarded office memos from her mother's work (which she brought home for drawing paper for Jen and her twin brother, Scott), into spiral notebooks she kept on a box on a shelf in her closet, and eventually on hard disks and USB files. The most important part of writing for Jen growing up was examining her sexuality. Writing, she explains, was her "emotional test kitchen," wherein she wrote about teens coming to grips with being gay the same way she was also a teen, coming to grips with being gay herself. In the late 80s, she notes, there were no novels about gay youth, nothing to make her feel like she belonged, or was understood, or even existed. So she wrote her novels. Now, having turned fifty in May, Jen is the author of three novels, three short story collections, and one couplet of novellas. Her novels *The Tide King*, *The Summer She Was Under Water*, and *You'll Be Fine* run the gamut from magical realism/historical fiction, family comedy, and family tragedy and have won The Big Moose Prize and Somerset Awards and a finalist for USA Book Awards. Her stories have appeared in numerous anthologies, and she's been nominated for the Pushcart Prize six times.

[wikipedia.Jen_Michalski](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jen_Michalski)

[@michalskijen](https://twitter.com/michalskijen)

www.jenmichalski.com

THE INTERVIEW

WITH AUTHOR JEN MICHALSKI

Q: What was your first thought when you started writing and when?

When I was seven, my mom folded a piece of paper into quarters to make a “book,” and I wrote a story about my birthday party. It was my first book, and I’ve been writing ever since. I remember feeling at the time that it was so natural but also like being gifted a superpower.

Q: What do you like to write about the most?

I write about things I want to understand—why people act the way they do, what makes a life worth living, and what do our authentic selves look like? Human nature interests me a lot, and it’s unavoidable when writing about, well, anything. Whether it’s science, history, or travel, the human condition is irrevocably intertwined with all of them.

Q: What does your book emphasize?

You’ll Be Fine is about accepting the family you have, rather than pining for the family you wanted or the family you lost. An important right of passage as an adult is forgiveness and acceptance, especially how it relates to one’s past. Can we accept our parents are merely people, too, imperfect and fumbling around just as we are?

Q: What book or childhood author had the greatest impact on you?

Reading Louise Fitzhugh’s *Harriet the Spy* when I was eleven or twelve was life-altering. To read about Harriet, a bright, slightly irascible girl, and her very real pains of friendships and growing up made me realize I wanted to write in an honest way about relationships and people and their faults.

Q: What is the most unethical practice in the publishing industry?

It’s not an unethical practice, but there’s inequity in the publishing industry, which will pay a million-dollar advance for some reality star’s ghost-written memoir or a pedestrian thriller while passing on lesser-known smaller-platform authors with quietly good novels. Sadly, like many industries, it’s not a meritocracy.

Q: What have been some of the most exciting changes you have seen with regard to support for LGBTQ youth and what do you hope to see in the future?

The Young Adult (YA) market has exploded with books for LGBTQ youth, and I’m a little jealous—I wish I had seen myself represented in books when I was younger! I hope to see more adaptations for film and streaming and LGBTQ YA writers able to sustain themselves in the industry.

Q: We hear stories about exclusion,

harassment, bullying, and other struggles of LGBTQ youth. How do you deal with the critics?

Fortunately, I haven’t had many experiences with this—I just try to either not read Goodreads reviews, and I also remind myself that not every book is for everyone, just as not everyone’s journey is the same. I do think, however, we should be unapologetic about our experiences as LGBTQ people and write as honestly about them as possible.

Q: Do you try more to be original or to deliver to readers what they want?

You have to write for yourself, I think, not others. If we’re willing to write books we think people want, we’re not really saying anything—we’re just regurgitating what’s already out there. I want people to walk away from my books thinking about something they may not have thought about before, or at least in a different way.

Q: Do you think someone could be a writer if they don’t feel emotions strongly?

No. You have to be honest with yourself to write authentically, and that means being in touch with yourself. Part of being a writer is putting yourself in other people’s shoes, and you can’t examine another point of view without being aware of your baseline feelings and beliefs.

Q: How did publishing your first book change your process of writing?

It made me realize that writing is a marathon, not a sprint and that hopefully, each book you write is an improvement on the last in some way—your plots are stronger, or characterization, or at the sentence level. Writing is difficult to learn and impossible to master—one is forever a student. I work harder.

Q: How many unpublished and half-finished books do you have?

I have two unpublished books—one a coming-of-age mystery in 1970s Rhode Island and a YA LGBTQ book about a psychic girls’ school. I’m proud of them and would buy them if I saw them in the store, but sometimes it’s just not the right time for a book, or doesn’t resonate with the right people.

Q: What does literary success look like to you?

I think getting a book published is successful. The icing on the cake is when someone reads your book and takes the time to email/DM you to tell you they responded to it in some way. Making a connection with other people gives me the greatest satisfaction, although I’d be lying if I said I didn’t want a movie adaptation!



SALAMAT SA INTERSECTIONALITY

BY AUTHOR DANI PUTNEY

Putney is working on their second full-length poetry collection, tentatively titled *Mix-Mix*, which excavates their mixed-race Filipinx identity more extensively by, for example, reformulating text from their late father's *Asian Romance Guide to Marriage* by Correspondence and their Ancestry.com profile. *Mix-Mix* also ruminates on Putney's relationship with their Filipina mother and considers intergenerational trauma, inherited mythologies, and the costs associated with reclaiming one's racial (and ethnic) identity. Putney resides in the middle of the Nevada desert close to their undergraduate alma mater.

ABOUT THE BOOK

Dani Putney's debut full-length poetry collection, *Salamat sa Intersectionality*, is a lyrical triptych that traces the evolution of the speaker's identity as a queer, non-binary, mixed-race Filipinx, and neurodivergent individual. Each "panel" of the speaker's life represents a distinct period of growth: a youthful beginning, which features important interactions with the speaker's parents; a sexually charged middle period that demonstrates the speaker's explorations of queer sexuality; and a contemplative third section wherein the speaker reckons with their various "selves." The imagery of the American West percolates through the collection to ground the speaker in their intersectional identity.

Salamat sa Intersectionality may also be thought of as an anthropomorphic sculpture—"anthropomorphic" rather than a more specific term like "human" because there exists liminality in the concept of anthropomorphism, as in not completely human but possessing human-like characteristics. Because the speaker's existence as a queer, non-binary, mixed-race Filipinx and neurodivergent individual is necessarily caught in the crosshairs of identity, their self-expression may not be completely understood through anthropocentric terms alone. The speaker jokes that they are swamp monsters or even an angel; indeed, these sentiments appear in the eponymous poem and "Angeligender," respectively. The in-between space of anthropomorphism cultivates a sense of freedom and creativity that enables the speaker to survive. Put another way, this collection is a reclamation of the speaker's swamp-monster self—in choosing to sculpt their anthropomorphic form throughout this collection, the speaker gives themselves permission to exist as they are.

Get your copy of "SALAMAT SA INTERSECTIONALITY" today on Amazon.



THE AUTHOR

Dani Putney is a queer, non-binary, mixed-race Filipinx, & neurodivergent writer originally from Sacramento, California. Putney's work interrogates the various facets of their intersectional identity, complicating notions of selfhood in relation to family, place, and literary theory. They began writing poetry "seriously" at age 17

after composing a love poem in green ink on loose-leaf paper for a boy they liked (and thought they were in love with). Before this fateful poem, they believed they were going to be a biologist or even a doctor, which their mother wanted them to become.

After graduating from high school, they went on to study creative writing at both the undergraduate and graduate levels, taking workshops in poetry, creative nonfiction, and new media writing. They received their BA in English (with a specialization in writing) from the University of Nevada, Reno, and their MFA in Creative Writing (with an emphasis on poetry) from Mississippi University for Women. Presently, they are a PhD student in English (with an emphasis in creative writing) at Oklahoma State University, where they study under Filipina poet Janine Joseph. Besides their debut full-length poetry collection, *Salamat sa Intersectionality* (Okay Donkey Press, 2021)—which was recently named a finalist for the 2022 Lambda Literary Award in Transgender Poetry—they have published a chapbook titled *Dela Torre* (Sundress Publications, 2022), which meditates on their mixed-race heritage.

Discover more from Author Dani Putney on the links below:

www.daniputney.com

[twitter.com/ DaniPutney](https://twitter.com/DaniPutney)

[daniputney1](https://www.instagram.com/daniputney1)

THE INTERVIEW

WITH AUTHOR DANIPUTNEY

Q: What was your first thought when you started writing and when?

My first thought was something along the lines of “Oh, this is fun!” I started “seriously” writing poetry when I was 17 years old; I wrote my first poem—in green ink and on loose-leaf paper—for a boy I had a major crush on during my senior year of high school.

Q: What do you like to write about the most?

I write about the various facets of my intersectional identity: queerness, non-binary gender, mixed-race Filipinx heritage, and neurodivergence, as well as the ways these identities inform one another and overlap. My second full-length poetry manuscript (in progress) is mainly about my racial identity, so I’ve been writing about that more intentionally as of late.

Q: What does your book emphasize?

Salamat sa Intersectionality is about embracing the messiness of one’s intersectional identity. Coming into one’s self is complicated, so the collection emphasizes tackling head-on the intersecting identities that form a person’s sense of selfhood. While reflecting on identity is difficult—it often involves confronting trauma—I believe this journey is necessary for people to more fully come into themselves.

Q: What book or childhood author had the greatest impact on you?

Sylvia Plath, specifically her posthumous collection, *Ariel*, was incredibly influential for me as a beginning poet. She was the first poet I read voraciously, as she understood mental illness on a deep, visceral level, an awareness I’d not yet seen in a poetry collection (or a novel, for that matter).

Q: What is the most unethical practice in the publishing industry?

I firmly oppose blind reading because it prevents historically underrepresented individuals from being properly considered. Part of the solution to cultivating a more inclusive publishing industry must include unlearning white, heteronormative aesthetic preferences, but if submissions are considered blindly, then writers who meet these “standards” more often than not continue to be published at a higher rate than disenfranchised folks.

Q: What have been some of the most exciting changes you have seen with regard to support for LGBTQ youth and what do you hope to see in the future?

In the US, there are several states, such as California, Iowa, and Maryland, with anti-discrimination and anti-bullying laws for queer youth in school settings. These laws give me

hope because they specifically recognize the need to safeguard the rights of LGBTQ+ young people, some of the most vulnerable individuals in the country. I hope more laws like this get passed.

Q: Do you try more to be original or to deliver to readers what they want?

I’d like to say neither. While I hope I’m being original (I’m an Enneagram Four, after all), I write something the way I need to write it. My primary audience is myself, so if I’m not being genuine to myself and my own experiences, then I’m not fulfilling the “mission,” if you will, of the poem.

Q: Do you think someone could be a writer if they don’t feel emotions strongly?

Probably, but I’m not sure how successful that person would be! I believe the best poetry (maybe even writing altogether) contains Duende, that mixture of danger and passion that erupts from the soles of somebody’s feet. You can’t have done without emotions—or the self-awareness of your emotional state.

Q: How did publishing your first book change your process of writing?

Not much, honestly. I still write the poems and personal essays I want to write when I want to write them. There’s so much flexibility in poetry and creative nonfiction, my two main genres, which means that the publishing process doesn’t change how I approach my writing. Again, I ultimately write for myself.

Q: How many unpublished and half-finished books do you have?

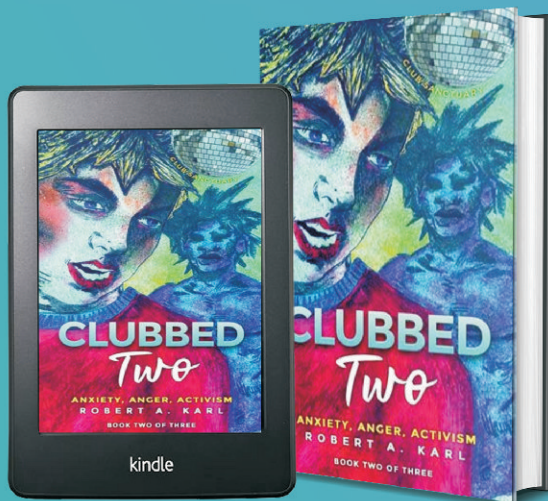
Just one, my second full-length poetry manuscript, tentatively titled *Mix-Mix*. However, I’m going to finish this book soon—within the next year or two—so I’m not worried about it. If you count chapbooks, I have an unpublished collection of personal essays, but I’m not actively submitting them. If it gets picked up, it gets picked up.

Q: What kind of research do you do, and how long do you spend researching before beginning a book?

As a Ph.D. student, I’m used to academic research, especially art history, my secondary emphasis in my program. However, for creative writing, it depends—I might look at archival documents to reformulate some text, or I might brush up on literary theory to make sure a conceit works in a poem. None of this research takes too long.

Q: How do you feel about being featured in

I’m excited! *DE MODE* is a lovely magazine with a wide reach, and as somebody who cares deeply about fashion, I can’t not love it.



CLUBBED TWO

BY AUTHOR ROBERT KARL

Clubbed Two: Anxiety, Anger, Activism by Robert Karl is the second book in his powerful and poignant historical fiction trilogy. Set in Philadelphia between 1982 to 1992 as the AIDS pandemic begins its assault, the story centers around Joey and Henry, lovers and owners of Club Sanctuary, and the diverse cast of characters who frequent their club. Their stories range from funny, and fabulous to tragic, but each character is merely attempting to make their way in a world filled with hate, fear and heartbreak.

ABOUT THE BOOK

CLUBBED TWO is historical fiction, set in Philadelphia PA from 1982 to 1992. A love story is included, but this is not your typical gay romance novel. It's his second book in a planned three-part series exploring LGBTQ history and culture.

Much of the story is told in a first-person narrative by Joey, the owner of Club Sanctuary. Joey and his partner, Henry, continue to develop their relationship as they build the club into a huge success. However, in order to provide greater insights into the words, thoughts and actions of various characters, the author often moves into a third-person narrative. This allows the reader to dive more deeply into the stories of characters whom Joey might not know at all. This format allows Club Sanctuary to be a metaphor for the greater LGBTQ community, without limiting the scope of the story. LGBTQ Pride; Diversity; Disability Awareness and Acceptance; Interracial Love; 1980s Queer Fashions and Fads; Ageism, Infidelity, and AIDS Activism.

Historical references are made as the characters attend the Gay Games, view the AIDS Memorial Quilt, or learn about the deaths of celebrities, AIDS activists and advocates, co-workers and friends. Others get involved with real-life organizations, such as ACT UP, as they struggle to fight against indifference and ignorance.

Readers have described the book as profound, poignant, fun, spicy, hilarious and as an amazing book with important stories. Come along for the ride and experience life in the true spirit of the Queer community.

 /robert-karl-27238458/

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THE AUTHOR

Robert A. Karl is a native son of Philadelphia, PA. He spent his adult life as an active member of the LGBTQ community there. He earned his M.Ed. from Temple University and worked for the School District of Philadelphia as a teacher and technology specialist for 30 years. He

also taught courses in Educational Technology at the Temple University College of Education.

Losing many friends to the AIDS pandemic dramatically altered his world. Living in the LGBTQ community provided the historical background for his novels, CLUBBED: A Story of Gay Love and CLUBBED TWO: Anxiety, Anger, Activism. His work is a tribute to the incredible diversity in the LGBTQ community.

By setting the novels in a specific place and time (Philadelphia, PA during the 1970s through the 1990s) the author uses Club Sanctuary as a metaphor for the LGBTQ community and the many characters in the books embody the fabulous, funny and flawed people of that community.

The author openly discusses issues of internalized homophobia, racism, ageism, sexism & other problems that continue to exist within the Queer community. Ignoring these problems does nothing to provide a solution. The author believes that open, honest communication is essential to preserving our culture and our world.

Currently retired, he is the proud Gay Dog Dad to Zuna, the Awesome Boston Terrier. Living in San Juan, Puerto Rico, he enjoys the beauty and culture of La Isla del Encanto, the Island of Enchantment.

THE INTERVIEW

WITH AUTHOR ROBERT KARL

Q: What was that final or provoking thought that made you write your first book?

For the CLUBBED series, which are my first novels, I wanted to share positive stories of LGBTQ characters, starting before the AIDS pandemic and continuing into the 21st Century. It was important for the stories to be authentic and reflect the realities of LGBTQ life. I started the work at the beginning of the COVID pandemic.

Q: What do you like to write about the most?

Queer characters find joy in life and accept themselves, even as they sometimes face adversity and obstacles. The overall theme of my books is to celebrate the diversity of Queer culture. I find empathy with characters who don't easily fit into the mold of the expectations of others.

Q: What does your book emphasize?

Club Sanctuary is a metaphor for the greater LGBTQ world, exploring both positive and negative aspects of the characters' lives. The positive, long-lasting interracial relationship between the two main characters provides a focus for the other stories. Accepting ourselves and others as we are is a major emphasis.

Q: What book or childhood author had the greatest impact on you?

I first read the works of James Baldwin many years ago, and I still re-read his works. His prose is brilliant. I recommend him to anyone who enjoys great literature. In CLUBBED TWO, the characters pay homage to Baldwin with a mural outside the club.

Q: What is the most unethical practice in the publishing industry?

I have no direct experience with the publishing industry because my books are self-published. When I first looked for a publisher, they wanted me to wait much too long for them to make a decision. I would like to see the industry be more receptive to new authors from any age group and include more diverse voices.

Q: Does writing energize or exhaust you?

Writing energizes me! I get excited to tell the stories and see where the characters take me. I don't do any outlines or construct elaborate maps for where the stories will go. For me, that's part of the energy and excitement, to travel along with the characters.

Q: What have been some of the most exciting changes you have seen with regard to support for LGBT youth and what do you hope to see in the future?

We now see ourselves represented more frequently in all types of media, which is

encouraging LGBTQ youth. There's still a long way to go and in some cases, we are now meeting strong resistance. More tolerance and acceptance are needed. And I want more stories with LGBTQ characters in all sorts of settings, including dramas, comedies, fantasies, etc.

Q: We hear stories about exclusion, harassment, bullying, and other struggles of LGBTQ youth. How do you deal with the critics?

The hatred never went away, though it seemed to subside somewhat for a few years. Now, in places like the US, people openly state their hatred of us and promote violence against us. I won't stoop to their level, but I will maintain a strong, dignified resistance and always support my community. And continue to share my stories.

Q: Do you try more to be original or to deliver to readers what they want?

I write stories that I love and I hope to find a connection with the readers. Each character comes from my heart. I describe them as fierce, fabulous, funny, and flawed. Their situations are sometimes funny, sad, serious, tragic, or all of them combined. Just like life.

Q: Do you think someone could be a writer if they don't feel emotions strongly?

Me, I get very emotional while writing. And by that, I mean a wide range of emotions. Sometimes, I'm laughing, or I'm terrified, or I'm crying. If I feel no emotion, then the writing hasn't served its purpose.

Q: How did publishing your first book change your process of writing?

It made me a more confident writer. It didn't change my process, but it did make my voice stronger. And it gave me the confidence to take chances.

Q: What does literary success look like to you?

Making a connection with the readers is the ultimate success. As a self-published author, it can be difficult to reach the right audience. I love to get direct feedback in the form of ratings and reviews. And I ask readers to send me photos of my books that I post on social media for "Where's My Book Wednesday."

Q: How do you feel about your book being featured in

This is a fantastic opportunity for me to reach an audience that I could never reach on my own. Thank you to DE MODE for including CLUBBED TWO in this issue. I am honored to be included. Thank you!



Photo: Michael Foust | Collection: Alberto Sanchezl



Photo: Michael Foust | Collection: Giannina Azar



Photo: Michael Foust | Collection: Merrebel Gifty Ackah



Photo: Michael Foust | Collection: Martin Polanco

dream **VIETNAM** ESCAPES



Photo: Ngọc Vương | Location: Thành phố Hạ Long, Quảng Ninh, Vietnam

Another statement piece that they found very important was the corset, used on a lot of important occasions such as quinceañeras (also called quinceaños or simple quinces). It's the celebration of a girl's 15th birthday, marking her passage from girlhood to womanhood, weddings and using a lot for female villains in telenovela dramas. They switch the rhetoric and made it for male or non-binary ones in our iconic industrial mesh.

For the shirts, they have played so many roles bringing the sexy as the start point, they can be used as an oversized shirt, a kimono, light jacket or a dress, made in raw linen.

This collection was showing during the NYFW SS22 season, for the THAILAND FASHION WEEK, they mixed and matched with their FW21/22 collections, bringing back some of the most iconic pieces of that collection trying to make some points that they have in the CHRISTIAN COLORADO brand, "fashion don't have rules", no gender or season ones.



colombian





Top 9 Must-Read For This Spring

JUSTICE & JUDGEMENT HORROR TALES

BY AUTHOR FREDERICK WILLIAMS

NAFIS AND THE COLOURFUL HALLWAYS

BY AUTHOR ALESSANDRO NICCOLI

IDYLLS OF THE NYMPHAI: FROM A MANTIC CORACLE

BY AUTHOR HARRY MATTHEWS

BLOOD AND DUST

BY AUTHOR J.C. PAULSON

WHAT IF JESUS WERE A COACH?

BY AUTHOR MICHAEL TAYLOR

WHELM

BY AUTHOR AIMEE MEHEDEN-FRIESEN

THE ZERO-SUM GAME OF YOU

BY AUTHOR ROSA L ANTONINI

AMONG THE PINES

BY AUTHOR MATT ANDERSON

HEIR TO THE EMPIRE: THE NEXT GENERATION

BY AUTHOR JONATHAN TAYLOR





NAFIS AND THE COLOURFUL HALLWAYS

BY AUTHOR ALESSANDRO NICCOLI

The 'novel' about Nafis leave behind centuries of history and speaks to readers of the 21st century. It tells us, in his long travel diary, that another Earth is possible...in a big reset. Nafis - accompanies the reader in understanding the consequences of man's presumption and greed.

ABOUT THE BOOK

From pandemic to normality

In this book by Author Alessandro Niccoli, read about the great revolution of a 13-year old boy, Nafis. Skinny, has green eyes and his hair is dishevelled. He lives in a big city in Southern Europe. It's the 21st century at the beginning of a worldwide pandemic and the fourth technological revolution that marks a point of no return. Poor lifestyles, senseless consumption of goods misunderstood as happiness, pollution and destruction cause Nafis to have a serious existential crisis. In this context, the boy experiences the rebellion of nature, which is the true protagonist of the book, in a whirlwind of emotions. One day, in a park in his smoky city, a ray of light strikes across his eyes and changes their colour. From that moment onwards, Nafis decides to change his life; nothing will be the same again.

He returns to live in the woods in a continuous adventure with faithful human and animal friends, where they walk together listening to prosperous past and present lives, in the symphony of nature.

Nafis explores his dreams, imagination, friendships and feelings, and gradually finds the strength that he had lost; he rediscovers the incredible abilities of the mind thanks to the energy he derives from his landscapes, which are masterfully illustrated.

Thanks to practicing ancient disciplines in nature, like a warrior, Nafis wages a peaceful war with words as powerful as swords, to awaken ideas, emotions and the masses, rediscovering a wonderful world that needs to be defended, towards a new era.

Get your copy of 'Nafis' today.

Connect with Author Alessandro Niccoli socially

 57895537-nafis-and-the-colourful-hallways  www.nafisbook.com



THE INTERVIEW

WITH AUTHOR ALESSANDRO NICCOLI

Q: What was your first thought when you started writing and when? What literary pilgrimages have you gone on?

For me, writing is a voyage across time and space, where the human being may find freedom, adventure, fulfillment, and joy. I didn't get good marks in school as a teenager. I would rather spend my days outside in nature. On the other hand, the teacher of Italian literature told my mother: "Alessandro will become a writer." My literary journeys have taken me from Hermann Hesse to Oriana Fallaci, through Paulo Coelho and Tiziano Terzani.

Q: What is the most unethical practice in the publishing industry?

To deceive aspiring authors with false promises of publication, extorting significant sums of money for works that will never be properly published and marketed, with the sole intention of taking advantage of them.

Q: Does writing energize or exhaust you?

Both. If there is inspiration at the beginning, the energy is enormous and drives me to write and write. The breaks are then used to take care of basic needs and go for a few runs in the woods to let off steam before starting again.

However, at the end of the manuscript, due to the endless rereadings with the editor, I must admit that I was on the verge of a psychological breakdown.

Q: What are common traps for aspiring writers?

Instead of thinking about the outcome, writing should be a disinterested act of passion, an aesthetic endeavor inspired by profound listening to oneself. Then, using our capacity to convert ideas into feelings, we may enrich them with puns and amazing settings where the reader can dive in.

Q: Does a big ego help or hurt writers?

I believe that ego is a major flaw cultivated by human society to prevail over others, nature, and the animal world. Storytelling, whatever the theme it deals with, must always originate from inspiration. In my opinion, the presence of a strong ego is very limiting.

Q: What is your writing Kryptonite?

It is clear to me how detrimental it is to write without inspiration. It won't bring a good experience to the reader and risks producing useless works.

Q: Have you ever experienced writer's block?

Yes, it's physiological. You just have to go out, breathe, run, live, laugh, and get over it.

Q: Did you ever consider writing under a pseudonym?

No, although I did it once. I wrote a strong pamphlet on conformism. I used the

pseudonym as a shield, but now that I am older, I have no reservations about publishing anything under my own name. I don't see the meaning of using a stage name, but I have nothing to say if someone wants to do it.

Q: Do you try more to be original or to deliver to readers what they want?

I write primarily for myself because writing gives me energy and nourishes my fantasies. It is only after that, that my focus shifts to the readers because of my desire to shake them, to make them discover new feelings, experiences, and possibilities.

Q: Can someone be a writer if they don't feel emotions strongly?

From what I said above, the answer comes by itself. Emotions, in my opinion, are the foundation of life and creativity. My emotions don't have to be extremely strong if they are compelling enough to give me the impulse to start a journey.

Q: How did publishing your first book change your process of writing?

The unexpected publication of my first book, by an Italian (and international) publishing house called Europa Edizioni, gave me great satisfaction, but it didn't push me to write more. The desire to write new stories was born on its own, based on strong inspirations. The first publication, if anything, may have given me more confidence.

Q: What kind of research do you do, and how long do you spend researching before beginning a book?

The idea of a book comes from intuition. After that, to feed my initial insight, I place my attention only on the coincidences, anecdotes, readings, emotions, and experiences of daily life. Next comes the vision of a character's actions and psychology. It is then that intuition and previous reflections take shape but only by letting go and completely freeing oneself in a sort of meditation, liberation, and rebirth, that the book comes to be.

Q: Do you have any upcoming books? What is it about?

I'm working on my third book: Danit, the story of a rebellious girl who runs away from home with a thoroughbred horse she frees from captivity. Danit will have many adventures in the forests with her horse and the other companions she meets.

Q: How do you feel about your book being listed by MODE?

I am pleased and flattered by DE MODE's interest in my work. A coincidence? I don't believe in coincidences ... when a meeting takes place, there is always a reason. Certain synchronicities should never be ignored. And if Carl Gustav Jung says so, we should reflect.



IDYLLS OF THE NYMPHAI: FROM A MANTIC CORACLE

BY AUTHOR HARRY MATTHEWS

Idylls of the Nymphai from a Mantic Coracle is Harry Matthews' seventh poetry collection. In it, the author takes us on a journey with the Nymphs from the vantage point of a mantic coracle.

ABOUT THE BOOK

Idylls of the Nymphai from a Mantic Coracle is the 7th poetry collection by Harry Matthews. The poems concerning the Nymphai, the author informs us, were inspired by a peculiarly mantic coracle on the River Severn, in Shropshire, England- an eminent past-time, whose legendary hospitality and insights the author has frequently enjoyed.

The book is a collection of 45 short and interesting poems with rhyme scheme, irregularly grouped, each with a unique taste to offer. Each poem will resonate deeply with its imagery of sunsets, rivers, and the unbearable absence of the Beloved. The book is so well written that the readers can connect on many levels.

It's the seventh poetry book by the author so you can expect the book to be one of the best, with his experience in the art of poetry. When you pick up the book you won't be able to put it down without finishing. The poems are smooth and easy to read. It's a literary masterpiece by the author who says: "Theocritus called his pastoral poems "idylls" ('short poems'), particularly on a rustic theme. The Nymphai (Nymphs) were female spirits of the natural world- of the forests, rivers, springs, meadows, mountains, and seas. They say a load of a man is his coracle...a symbol for a spiritual journey, but also wholeness and completion; the surrender of one's life to God." The author brings forth verses narrating the lives of mythological characters with a witty, contemporary twist. These verses are beautifully written and make you experience feelings of tranquillity and laughter.

Get your copy of 'Idylls of the Nymphai' today.

Connect with Author Harry Matthews socially

✧ [Idylls-of-the-Nymphai-from-a-Mantic-Coracle](https://www.idylls-of-the-nymphai-from-a-mantic-coracle.com) 🌐 www.harryartpublishing.co.uk



THE INTERVIEW

WITH AUTHOR HARRY MATTHEWS

Q: What was your first thought when you started writing and when?

I wrote my first book in June 2020. It was simply to fill in the time. So, I suppose the answer was to cure boredom. I needed some activity to keep my mind off things. I wrote my latest book in July this year...My thought: I'm going to write this book about Nymphs; a dreamy pastoral collection, inspired by Shropshire.

Q: What literary pilgrimages have you gone on?

I have been to Hereford on several literary pilgrimages with the Thomas Traherne Association, both at Hereford Cathedral and St Mary's Credenhill, also the Church in Teddington where he is buried. I could also mention Lawrence's Clouds Hill in Dorset. I happened to be at Rohet Gahr near Jodhpur once where Bruce Chatwin wrote a draft of 'The Songlines'.

Q: What is the most unethical practice in the publishing industry?

Predatory publishers.

Q: Does writing energize or exhaust you?

I find painting energies me with an uplift. I do my own artwork for my books, and I find that really helps to sell the book and make it more interesting. If I write poetry, I feel inspired, and determined, but without sufficient rest after finishing the book, I am easily exhausted.

Q: What are common traps for aspiring writers?

Cliché and an inability to accept criticism are pitfalls. It is always good to read as a writer and write with a reader in mind. I learned a lot from my masters in writing, but I don't think they can teach how to write. One must read writers. I think focus and perseverance conquers most of the snares.

Q: Does a big ego help or hurt writers?

I think a writer needs an ego to survive in an ego driven world, but the less of the writer in the writing, the stronger the writing, especially in English.

Q: What is your writing Kryptonite?

Well I'm hardly a Superman, but I think that my Achilles heel is over-exerting myself; this always lands me in trouble and burnout is something I have to guard against or rest through! I think the cure is sometimes the poison and vice versa. Ginseng for instance, gives me focus, but it makes me garrulous and excitable! 57 words

Q: Have you ever gotten a reader's block?

Yes, quite a few times. I am hyperactive, but when I do focus, I have a depth of concentration that surprises me. There are a few books I should read, but I probably won't, but that's fine, I read when I can, and have several on the go at once.

Q: Did you ever consider writing under a pseudonym?

Not seriously I considered a pseudonym: 'Perceval de Lillard'. My artist nom du guerre for a time was 'Hazman' but for writing I feel okay with my birth name.

Q: Can someone be a writer if they don't feel emotions strongly?

They could write, but I doubt it would have much impact. What interests me is that I learned language first from my mother by means of 'poetic devices'. If you can imagine it, and really feel it, and thereby describe it, then the reader will believe it and feel it too, and perhaps always remember it?

Q: What's the best way to market your books?

Having a book is like having a website. It can be brilliant, so it better be presented to the right people, so it can take off.

Q: How did publishing your first book change your process of writing?

Not much, except I now take longer to write. With the first book I drafted a poem or two a day every day for a month. I went straight to drafting, all the thinking and gathering in my memory; ideas reaching maturity after brewing for years. Draft, revise, edit. The Idylls took 4 months- I had doctoral research in tandem.

Q: How many unpublished and half-finished books do you have?

I have boxes full of them! I plan to get round to publishing a few more. The Amsterdam story has been with me since I was 22. It will probably be a massive tome. Then there is the ocean fantasy I've conceived as a trilogy. Then there many more poetry collections simmering nicely...

Q: What kind of research do you do, and how long do you spend researching before beginning a book?

I find I do plenty of research for my poetry collections in the academic library, especially around the theme that emerges. The Idylls required Classical research, and the bucolic poets such as Theocritus and Virgil who inspired me. I did research on coracles still used on the River Severn in Shropshire today. Being in a coracle is research.

Q: How do you feel about your book being listed by MODE?

It's truly lovely. Writing each of my poetry books is hard work- I'm never sure it will reach the audience I hope for it. Being listed by DE MODE is a great feeling for me, because it means my collections of poems made it wider across the world and raised a laugh - which is really all I'm trying to do.

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