



The Letterpress Project

An Interview with Ria Amber Tesia

Q1. What are your earliest memories of books and reading? For example, did you have a favourite or inspirational book?

My earliest memory is of reading the BFG by Roald Dahl when I was around 10 years old. I read the book over one weekend. When I returned to school, my teacher didn't believe me (she didn't know I was a voracious reader).

My favourite book in the whole wide universe is Frances Hodgson Burnett's A Little Princess. The writing is beautiful, story heart-breaking, and the ending, positively magical.

Q2. What inspired you to become an author?

I have always written since as far back as I can remember, and for the past 15 years, have become more prolific with my food writing and fiction in the form of the Screaming Snowflakes saga. It seemed natural to want to write, and I think that's because of the freedom I feel when writing. It's nothing short of necromancy that you somehow populate a page with cogent sentences, and ultimately engage the reader for hours on end.

Q3. For you, what makes a successful book?

For me, a successful book is all about broadening the mind and getting people to think. If you read a book and find it stays with you even after you've turned the last page, then that's a success. The last book that I found thought-provoking was Ruth Goodman's How To Be A Victorian. I'm not a huge fan of non-fiction, but couldn't stop thinking of Ruth's engaging prose, which detailed vividly, life in the Victorian era. Did you know washing hair was frowned upon back in the day? You learn new things every day!

Q4. Do you have a specific audience in mind when you write your books?

I don't have a specific reader in mind. Some say that you must visualise your reader, as your book is a 'product' which needs the 'right audience'. I write YA fiction, but that doesn't necessarily mean that it's for young adults only. I have readers in their 50s who love my books. I find YA a great genre to both read and write, indeed any genre doesn't have to be age specific.

Q5. What future do you think the physical book has? For example, do you think the electronic book will replace the physical book?

Ever since the launch of Kindle, harbingers of the “print is dead” school of thought continue to lambast print. Is it really dead? No, it isn’t. I’m a dual reader (Kindle and paperback). Which do I prefer? Either. If I’m at home, it’ll probably be a paperback whilst I’m curled up on the couch. If I’m on my travels, it’ll be a lightweight Kindle. I don’t think e-books will ever replace physical books, they’re just another medium in which to enjoy reading.

Q6. Are you a book collector? Is there a special book you’d love to own?

I wish I was a book collector. I’d LOVE to have the first edition of *The Count of Monte Cristo* by Alexandre Dumas and as mentioned earlier, *A Little Princess* by Frances Hodgson Burnett. I own around 200 cookbooks – does that count?