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Interview with Heather Rivera about Her Upcoming New Book



Feature Interview of Dr. Heather Rivera
November 2018

Dr. Heather Rivera is a prolific and versatile author of eight books and counting. She is the focus of today's interview because she plans to release an inspirational e-book for writers in January 2019. I am proud to have collaborated on this book with Dr. Heather Rivera and Dr. Marjorie Miles of Muse & Ink.

Lillian: Heather, thanks for taking time for this interview.

Heather: Thank you so much for having me. I'm excited to be featured on "News from Lillian." You're very special to me. Not only do I consider you one of my dearest friends, but you are also my trusted editor. I wouldn't be able to do my writing job without you.

Lillian: Muse & Ink: Soul Expressions through Writing is the title of your new book. How did you come up with this title?

Heather: The title was easy. I knew it had to be Muse & Ink. Years ago, Dr. Marjorie Miles and I decided to collaborate on some writing projects, workshops, and a writing festival. We came up with the name Muse & Ink at our favorite café. Dr. Miles teaches a “Writing with Your Inner Dream Muse” workshop. We thought the name represented a balance between the two sides of our brain—right and left. Utilizing both sides of the brain makes a good writer—the muse and the ink. Coming up with the subtitle was a little more difficult. I wanted to express how important I believed writing authentically was good for our soul. I found so much healing from writing-especially writing fiction and I wanted to share what I discovered.

I also knew that I needed help. I can’t think of two better people to collaborate on this project with me. Thank you, Lillian Nader and Marjorie Miles.

Lillian: Please give a brief description of the book.

Heather: Muse and Ink: Soul Expressions Through Writing offers tips and exercises for creative self-expression. This book is a collaboration by three authors based on their own experiences as writers. The book also includes editing tips by Lillian Nader author/editor and activities by workshop facilitators, Dr. Marjorie Miles, and Dr. Heather Rivera. Our mission is to help writers find their creative spark, get their message out into the world, and flourish. We honor and encourage voices that may have been suppressed for years to finally emerge by providing a supportive, heart-centered, intuitive, and playful approach to both writing and publishing.

Lillian: I know you are a writing coach as well as a published author of nonfiction, fiction, and books for young readers. You have a Life Coaching certificate along with a Creative Writing certificate from Wesleyan University, and you currently facilitate Finding your Voice Workshops in addition to one-to-one consulting with writers. What motivates you to teach other writers in addition to your own creative expression through writing?

Heather: I remember what it was like when I was just starting out. I had tons of questions and searched for answers. I love teaching and passing on what I’ve learned brings me joy. I want to see others succeed.

Lillian: How has your experience as a writing coach and student affected the content of Muse & Ink: Soul Expressions through writing?

Heather: It was my desire to share what I’ve learned over the years from practicing my craft. If I can inspire another writer or help someone discover the joy and healing from creative writing,

I'll be overjoyed. When I teach my writing workshop, I'm amazed at what the students write. I've learned a lot from them. By sharing what we write and being receptive listeners, we grow together.

Lillian: What else motivated you to write the book?

Heather: I think one of the things that makes our book and our workshops unique is the use of guided imagery. Being that we are all trained in hypnotherapy, we were able to present some nice visualizations in the book. When I'm teaching a workshop, I like using guided imagery and having the attendees write from a relaxed state. I believe it helps the writer dig deeper and gives them the space to find their writing voice.

Lillian: As a published author and writing coach, who or what has inspired you the most?

Heather: I am not sure I can narrow it down to one person or one thing. Many things and people inspire me. I'm inspired by reading books by my favorite authors like Susanna Kearsley and reading books about writing like *On Writing: A Memoir of the Craft* by Stephen King. I'm inspired by nature and some special people that have touched my life along the way.

Lillian: How long have you been writing?

Heather: I've been writing most of my life. As a child I wrote poetry, then as a young adult I wrote children's stories. Later, I started writing for magazines and then I progressed to full-length novels. I enjoy writing novels more than any other form of expression. Lillian: You recently relocated from California to Hawaii. Just as the setting can drive the plot of a story, how has your new real-life setting impacted your writing?

Heather: It's quieter here. I think that helps me drop into my story quicker. Also, the scenery is breathtaking so taking a walk is a great way to get unstuck. I do miss the cafes in California, though.

Hawaii, I've realized, is as good a place as any to sit down and get serious about writing. It's all about our commitment to the craft.

Lillian: I wrote a chapter on dreams for our book in which I cite several well-known stories that originated from dreams. Have you had dreams that inspired any of your books?

Heather: It's funny that you ask. A few of my books were inspired by dreams. The first novel I wrote, *Quiet Water*, came from a dream. I woke early in the morning with the story "downloaded" into my head. I excitedly told the story to my husband, and he loved it. Over nine months I wrote it. It was a lot of fun.

Into *Exaltia*, *Twice Again*, and a new novel I'm working on, *Chasing Chance*, also came from my dreams. I keep my smartphone by my bed to jot down notes if I have a dream that I need to remember.

Lillian: You also write a monthly newsletter called *Muse and Ink News*. What is the best way to sign up for it?

Heather: Thank you for asking. The link to sign up for our *Muse News* is

<http://www.heatherrivera.com/subscribe-to-muse-news/>

By signing up, readers also get the free gift, "Ten Tips for Finding Your Voice."

Lillian: Speaking of *Muse & Ink*, the concept started with you and Dr. Miles, and you recently included my editing tips in your publications. Thank you. Please explain the concept of *Muse & Ink* and its history.

Heather: I'm so glad that you're a member of our merry band of writers. As I mentioned above, it began with Dr. Miles and myself collaborating on a few projects and grew from there. The three of us also participate in a weekly author accountability email. I really appreciate having someone to check in with weekly. You both help keep me on track with my writing projects.

Lillian: You seem to have a never-ending supply of ideas for books. What will you be working on next?

I like to work on more than one book at a time. My new projects are two novels. One is called Chasing Chance. Chasing Chance is set on the island of Hawaii. The other manuscript is called Following Tai. I like to write stories that contain a little magic and a little romance.

Lillian: Do you have anything else you would like to say to your readers?

Heather: Thank you for taking the time to read my interview. I would love to hear from you. If you have any questions about the writing process, I hope you take the time to reach out to me at drheatherrivera@gmail.com

Lillian: Thanks so much for your thoughtful responses to my questions.

Heather: Thank you again for having me on “News from Lillian.” It was a lot of fun answering your questions.

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