

TEEN LIBRARIAN

Monthly

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Editorial

Welcome to the November edition of TLM! This month is a mixed bag of awards, event reviews, information on television series based on popular teen novels and more!

This month's interview is with Maria Snyder, author of the fantasy novel *Poison Study*, a review of which is available on the Teen Librarian website.

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The Teenage Book Prize

Wednesday 31st October

It was a glittering occasion as we gathered on the elegant and prestigious 10th floor at Number 80 The Strand, home of Puffin Books. What was the occasion? It was the Teenage Book Prize Award Ceremony, of course. The short list this year was particularly strong – including titles by Kate Cann, Theresa Breslin, Philip Reeve, Marcus Sedgewick – and two Carnegie winners, Mal Peet and Meg Rossoff. Anyone might have been the choice of the judging panel, which included four teenagers. As we sipped wine and nibbled the tasty fried morsels, the excitement grew. At last Val Bird, Director of Booktrust put us out of our misery. The winner – *My Swordhand Is Singing* by Marcus Sedgewick who received his award from the hand of Anthony McGowan, author of *Henry Tumour* and last year's winner. It was a thoroughly enjoyable occasion – and a very well deserved winner.

For more information visit the Book Trust website:
<http://www.bookheads.org.uk/07/winner07.php>

Catalyst Book Award 2007

Each year, S3 and S4 pupils from North Lanarkshire are invited to vote online for their favourite title in their school library or local public library. Now in its fourth year, previous winners of the Catalyst Book Award include Bali Rai, Theresa Breslin and Alan Gibbons.

This year's winner was Anthony McGowan for his book, 'Henry Tumour', published by Doubleday.

Should you wish to know more about the Catalyst Book Awards, please feel free to visit their website:
http://www.ea.n-lanark.sch.uk/catalyst_website/Home%20Page

Villainously Good Reads Wednesday 17th October

The T Bar was not the easiest place to find – an interesting subterranean venue, full of shadowy corners.....and a well stocked bar. But then what would you expect for a gathering of villains? This was the setting for Villainously Good Reads (a Simon & Schuster event in association with YLG London and SLG London and South East).

It was an opportunity to meet four of the most dynamic authors currently writing for young teens – Paul Bajoria, Mat Whyman, Justin Somper and Linda Buckley-Archer. Between them, these writers have created a gallery of “baddies”, some thoroughly nasty, others dashing entertaining. In fact, are they villains? This was one of the questions posed by Leonie Flynn (editor of the Ultimate Book Guides) and it generated some lively debate; Justin Somper felt he didn't “do” villains – he preferred to see them as “anti-heroes”; Paul Bajoria wanted really nasty baddies, while Mat Whyman's “villain” was created by circumstance, as was, to a certain extent, The Tar Man, created by Linda Buckley-Archer. All of these authors wanted to write books that were exciting – they were not subscribing to wickedness, but felt that readers responded if it was well done.

It was a thoroughly enjoyable evening in the company of some regular villains.

Kai-Ro Launch

Thursday 1st November

The Sir John Soane Museum must be one of the most exotic and exciting venues for a book launch. That was where we gathered, courtesy of Usborne, to celebrate *Kai-Ro* by Graham Marks. It was particularly appropriate setting for a book that features the ancient gods of Egypt. Sir John Soane was an extraordinary man and his house – in fact three houses – reflects this. After the official part of the evening (the book buying!), the guests at the event were given an opportunity to wander round the ground floor to see the amazing pictures collected by Soane, above all the Hogarth series, not only the Rake's Progress, but the magnificent Election set. Knowledgeable and unfailingly courteous warders demonstrated Soane's ingenious method of hanging and storing his paintings and answered any question asked of them. Even more exciting, we were allowed to go down to the lower floor where Soane housed his Egyptian, Greek and Roman antiquities, including the sarcophagus of the Pharaoh, Seti – the British Museum had refused to buy it, so Soane stepped in! The whole setting was lit by candles, which further enhanced the atmosphere of the evening; an occasion not to miss – but if you did, read the book!

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PopCulture

Gossip Girl

ITV2 has picked up the rights to show the series *Gossip Girl* based on the series by Cecily von Ziegesar. The show will be airing sometime in 2008. The story is written by The O.C.'s Josh Schwartz and Stephanie Savage, and directed by Mark Piznarski who has worked on series like *Everwood* and *Veronica Mars*

Clique

Best-selling teen novels, "*Clique*" by Lisi Harrison, which explore the complex world of young-adult social politics, are to be adapted into a direct-to-DVD series by Tyra Banks.

"I've been a mean girl and I've been teased, so I identify with both sides of it," Banks said in a statement to *Daily Variety*. "This is very much my brand, especially as teenage girls are dedicated to watching both my shows."

Banks will act as executive producer of the teen DVD series, which has been in the works since last summer.

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Spinebreakers

Spinebreakers.co.uk is Penguin's pioneering online book community for teenagers, run by teenagers themselves. Editorial control of the site is in the hands of a core editorial team of nine teenagers aged between 13 and 18 years, supported by a large network of contributing teen editors from across the UK.

www.spinebreakers.co.uk

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Lost for Words

One in five children leaves primary school unable to read properly.

Lost For Words was a Channel 4 season of campaigning programmes to get all kids reading.

http://www.channel4.com/culture/microsite/s/L/lost_for_words/aim.html

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Love Libraries is a campaign to make England's public libraries even better.

Top 10 Librarians 2007

In June, Love Libraries launched a competition to find ten inspiring individuals who have entered into a new career in public libraries, and are making a difference with their fresh and enterprising ideas. This year's Top 10 are:

[Bernadette Brewster](#)

Youth Librarian
London Borough of Haringey

[Josie Crimp](#)

Children's Librarian
London Borough of Croydon Libraries

[Helen Dahlke](#)

Reader Development Librarian
West Berkshire Library Service

[Sam Davies](#)

Library Information Officer
Manchester Library and Information Service

[Alexis Dimyan](#)

Community Librarian
Luton Library Service

[Jennifer Foster](#)

e-services Assistant Librarian
Trafford Library Service

[Elizabeth McDonald](#)

Reader Development Officer
Wokingham Library Service

[Emma Sherriff](#)

Outreach Support Officer
Plymouth Library Service

[Phyll Smith](#)

Assistant Librarian
North East Lincolnshire Library Service

[Laura Warnock](#)
Community Health Officer
Sunderland Library Service

To find out more, follow this link:
<http://www.lovelibraries.co.uk/librarians.php>

Love Libraries Award 2007

The Love Libraries Award celebrates the fantastic work libraries do to encourage more young people through the doors to discover all the great things libraries have to offer.

The winner of the Love Libraries Award 2007 is Get It Loud in Libraries!

Lancaster Library is breathing new life into the service, with some of the hottest new bands performing exclusive gigs in the library and bringing in diverse crowds.

Halloween Cosplay – follow up

As the November date for my Manga group fell on the 1st November it was decided that a Cosplay event would be appropriate. Out of the 21 attendees – most of whom were dressed in their school uniforms (as extras from *Negima* and *School Rumble*) there were seven who got into the spirit of the event and came dressed as their favourite Manga and anime characters.



Winners of the Cosplay Competition



The editor in action



Kitsune Mask



Mangaka in action

Submissions

If anyone would like to submit an article or idea for inclusion in the newsletter, please send it to teenlib@teenlibrarian.co.uk

Eight Questions with... Maria Snyder

Q1. What influenced your decision to write for Teenagers?

I never consciously decided to write for Teens. When I finished writing my first book, *Poison Study*, my 14 year-old niece asked to read the manuscript. She was a voracious reader, and, after only a moment's hesitation to review the plot for anything truly objectionable, I handed her the stack of pages on a Friday night. By Sunday afternoon she had finished the book and loved it. Her reaction gave me the idea that Teens might enjoy reading *Poison Study*.

Q2. How do you get into the heads of your characters?

It's very similar to acting. I was involved in the theatre in High School, and in order for me to accurately portray a character I had to know as much about them as possible. Learning the character's history, family situation, and moral views, I would then translate their thoughts and feelings onto the stage. It is the same for writing. The character's reaction to certain problems will be decided by their personality not by how I think the situation should be handled. For example, my main character, Yelena is braver than I am, and while I would normally shy away from a tense situation, she dives right in.

Q3. Do you know instinctively what will appeal to Teens or is it more a hit or miss process?

Hit or miss :-) I write what appeals to me as a reader. I enjoy reading about strong female characters. Besides fantasy, I also like mysteries, suspenseful thrillers, and paranormal romances. *Poison Study* has all those elements. I believe if I tried to appeal to a certain group of readers, the story would be forced. Instead, I write books that I would enjoy reading, and hope there are other readers out there who agree with me.

Q4. What is the most satisfying part of the writing process for you?

The most satisfying aspect is when my characters come to life. As the author, I have a general idea of what my characters are going to do and how they're going to learn and grow throughout the story.

When the character decides that, no, he won't sit there and fume quietly like I want him to, but grab an axe and destroy a shed – that's the greatest moment. It surprises me – so it's sure to surprise the reader, and it's exactly the right thing to do all along. My unconscious takes over the story and the results are always wonderful.

Q5. Do you ever read the works of other Teen/YA authors? If yes what can you recommend?

Yes. I enjoy reading YA novels. I would recommend *Twilight* and *New Moon* by Stephenie Meyer, *A Princess of Roumania* by Paul Park, *The Astonishing Adventures of Fanboy and Goth Girl*, by Barry Lyga, and *Evolution, Me and Other Freaks of Nature*, by Robin Brande.

Q6. Are any of your novels based on personal experiences?

I look at life as fodder for my writing. Everything I've done, everyone I meet and everywhere I go percolates in my mind, and will eventually appear in my fiction in some form. While I haven't worked as a food taster for a military dictator, I have tasted food using the same methods and am able to use that information to help my character.

Q7. Are you working on anything new at the moment (or do you have anything planned)?

Magic Study, the second book in my Study Series is due to be released in April 2008. I love the tag line for *Magic Study*: "You know your life is bad when you miss your days as a poison taster." *Magic Study* continues Yelena's adventures as she travels to the southern lands to learn how to control her magic. But nothing is ever easy for her, and she's soon tangled in a plot to reclaim Ixia's throne for a lost prince and becomes a rogue magician's next target. The third book in the series, *Fire Study* will be available in December 2008. In *Fire Study* Yelena is drawn deeper into the magical world where she encounters blood magic and a Fire Warper intent on regaining his ancient powers.

Q8. Do you ever do Library visits to Teen Reading Groups? If yes, what is the best way to get into contact with you or your agent about it?

I would love to visit Teen Reading Groups, but I live in the United States and it's a rather long and expensive commute!

Reading groups and readers are always welcome to contact me by email (maria@mariavsnyder.com) with any questions or comments at any time. I also provide discussion questions for each of my books on request.