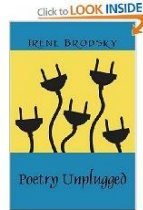




Interview with Author Irene Brodsky



“I HAD to publish my book somehow...someday... because of the experience of the World Trade Center which is an example of not putting off what you can do today.” Quote by Irene Brodsky



click on the book to go to the Amazon page to look inside the book

As a writer, what types of things inspire you to come up with your poetry? Are there certain places you go to, books you read, shows you watch, or something else that sparks a new idea?

I have been inspired by song lyrics (Bee Gees, John Lennon, and love songs from the 1950's). But I have been inspired the most by my Poetry Professor Matthew Burgess who had a daily inspirational idea to write about. (Earth day, Spring break, supermarkets, paintings, occupations, old neighborhoods, etc.)

It says in your author bio on the back cover that you graduated from Brooklyn College. In that same time period, you published your first book. I find this to be a terrific testimony to others because it shows me that you can accomplish your dreams no matter how old you are. Have you always wanted to write? What was it that motivated you to write this book, and is there anything you learned from writing it.

I graduated at age 60 from Brooklyn College with a BA degree in Philosophy and a minor in English. At that time, I had a collection of 43 poems which I sent to many publishers & poetry contests. Forty of these poems were written

while attending Poetry Class. It was a requirement for our final grade. I learned that you never know what you can do, unless you try to do it!

What is the best thing about being a writer? What's the worst (if there is worst)?

The best thing about being a writer is having someone actually read your book! Knowing that it is your words and thoughts they are reading. The worst thing about being a writer is trying to find a highly respected publisher.

Did you consider traditional publishing or did you know from the beginning that you were going to self-publish? How do you feel about self-publishing?

When I sent my manuscript out, I had no previous experience with publishers. I received many offers to publish my book for as much as \$7,000. Offers came from "ghostwriters" as well. And many publishers did not accept poetry. Many publishers said they only accepted work from agents. Many did not answer me at all. This went on from 2007 - 2008 until I entered a poetry chapbook contest given by Writers Digest. I did not win the contest but their publisher accepted by book! A representative sent me a review of it and made suggestions. All of my work was done online in an online office provided by the publisher. No traditional mailing was necessary.

I did write to many agents I found online and most of them said that they did not accept poetry. Eventually I got the hint that writing a children's book was what they wanted. Since then, I have written two children's books. One is published as an e-book by a Board of Education website to promote literacy & the paperback version is available from me. The next book will be available by September on Amazon Books. It is being published by Create Space (Amazon Publishers).

I did not know about self-publishing until I heard from Outskirts Press. I think it is such a creative way of making sure your work does not get re-arranged to sound like everyone else's work. Also, you have much input regarding designing your own book cover or select from many images. It was self-published and I am proud. I made that happen! No one handed it to me on a silver platter. I studied for it. I earned it. It's my words and they come from my lips to reach someone's heart in a very nice way!

Speaking of the three books you have altogether, how do you come up with covers for them?

Two of my book covers were made by graphic artists. I chose the design from a selection of images and colors. The third cover was illustrated by me. All other illustrations were done by me after attending a 6 month art class and all text is my own. My children's books are "Silly Kitty" (Shared-Books.Ltd.Press) and "Adventures of Silly Kitty, Princess Jasmine & Silly Puppy" soon to be available on Amazon. The effort that went into all of this was monumental to say the least but worth every minute of it.

What was easy about going through Outskirts Press? What was difficult?

Outskirts Press makes life easy for a new writer by providing a representative who guides you step-by-step through the process. You receive an online office to work in, a profile page is set up for you, a publicity release is sent to the press, and a marketing coach is provided after you write the book to give you daily ideas how to promote your book. They have many package deals that fit your budget. All of them include ISBN, bar code, copyright, representative, marketing coach, website, online office and having your book on every major book site.

Thank goodness for Outskirts Press. They have packages to fit anyone's pocket. In conclusion, I began sending out my poems in June, 2007 and my book was published on November 24, 2008.

What do you do to promote your book?

I have made a "thank you video" to send to anyone who buys my book. I made up many flyers advertising my book as a great gift for any occasion such as Valentine's Day, Mother's Day, Birthday or just a gift for yourself to curl up with on a rainy evening! I have an Amazon profile page on Jacketflap.com, and also on Librarything, Cambridge Who's Who, Facebook, and Outskirts Press. My book is in the catalog and on the shelf of The Brooklyn College Library, The Park Slope Library and The Mapleton Library. (Brooklyn, New York) My newest poems are now displayed every month in Writers In The Sky Newsletter and in Mystic Living Today Newsletter where they also inform the readers where they can buy my book.

And coming to your book now, it seems that you have a wide selection of poetry, from the humor of a brother telling his sister about King Kong, to the recollection of the past where you grew up, to a mini-story in regards to a man,

a woman, and his mother (which is my favorite one), and to celebrating America. Are you in a certain mood when you write a particular type of poem or does the mood not affect what you write?

My book started out with three poems, "The Tallest Twins", "Dark Shadows" and "Natural Beauty on The Hill." Then I took a class called "Poetry 1 and 2" and was never the same again. The Professor had an inspiring thought to write about every day and by the end of the semester it was a Final Exam Requirement to have a minimum of FORTY poems. My 40 poems included graduation day, my family, vacation spots, Halloween stories I read to public school children, food, unrequited love, beautiful nature, tributes, memoirs, etc.

What are two of your favorite poems from this book and why?

My most memorable poem is "Tallest Twins" because my 55th birthday was on the day of The World Trade Center tragedy 9/11/01. This is the first poem I ever wrote in my entire life. My favorite poem is "Lily of The Valley" which is a tribute to my lovely mother, Lillie Kerschman, and my handsome father, Samuel Kerschman. May they rest in peace.

Do you have any final words to share with everyone?

Poetry is truly my best friend. I hope this information is helpful to someone out there. Before 9/11/01 I NEVER WROTE A POEM OR STORY. .. and look what happened since that time. It did not take 20 years to do it. Including my 5 years of college & education, it took exactly 7 years to study, graduate, send out my poems, find a publisher, and get published! If I had to do it all over again, I am not sure i would have the strength but you can be sure I would give it my best shot. God bless any reader who sees this and decides to write a book. Just do it!!!!!!!!!!!!!! and never stop.

Here's a poem that Irene has agreed to let me post:

"CAMPUS CAT" by irene brodsky

Green eyes sparkle like precious emeralds
as she makes her way across the quad
to settle down under a cherry-blossom tree.

Campus Cat is her name
Such an independent creature is she

She meows only if she feels like it.

Students leave food for her
Friskie's tuna is her favorite dish
And then it's time for a nap.

She will curl up to you
on the newly mowed lawn
She's just sleepy.

But she will be waiting for you
by the lily pond
when the day is through.

And who knows?
Maybe she will meow
just for you.

Thank you for the interview, Irene!



To find more information about Irene Brodsky, you can go to the links below:

www.facebook.com/Irene_brodsky

www.outskirtspress.com/PoetryUnplugged

www.jacketflap.com/profile.asp?member=irenebetty