Today I spoke with Evangelina Joseph who comes to us from just outside New York City in pretty New Jersey suburbs!

She is best known and most recognized by this image.



Evangelina is on her maiden voyage into the world of authorship. Join me in welcoming Evangelina to the community!

Evangelina,
Thank you for allowing me to interview you. It is such a privilege to speak with authors at every stage of their journey. We have so much to glean from each other, I am excited to have this opportunity!

Can you first tell me a little something about yourself? How did you get into writing?

As a highly creative person, my first love besides reading was not originally writing, but art. I am an artist with a degree in Fine Arts and Graphic Design. Later I returned to college for an additional degree as an Elementary Teacher because I adore children. Ironically, since childhood I always believed I would illustrate and write children's books, never dreaming I would become so passionate about Historical Romance Novels instead. However, after discovering Jane Austen several years ago, my fate was sealed. No turning back now, I am obsessed.

When did reading become a passion of yours?

Inheriting a mind with a thirst for knowledge and adventure, as well as a vivid imagination, I fell in love with reading as a child. By middle school years I had read nearly every decent book in most every genre in the school library. Eventually, Librarians would call me out of class to the library to peruse newly arrived shipments, allowing me to take my fill and requesting I report back with critiques. However, by high school with the discovery of flirting and boys, my enjoyment of reading was shamefully forgotten.

What did you read as a child?

Although as a child I read everything available such as classics, mysteries, thrillers, sci fi, I was partial then to paranormal. However that has definitely changed.

What has changed over the years?

In High School, I forgot my love of reading novels entirely. In college and beyond if it didn't involve self-education and a yellow highlighter, I didn't touch it. Then several years ago i purchased Harry Potter as a gift for someone, thinking it would not interest me. I only meant to read a paragraph or two, to see what all the buzz was about . . . And could not put it down. Reawakening my love for novels, shortly after this I discovered Jane Austen's Pride & Prejudice and have been utterly addicted to Historical Romance Novels ever since. The only exception in my reading is an occasional variance in another genre given to me and written by one of the many author friends I have been lucky enough to make over the past two years since joining the online community of Twitter. I am brand new to Facebook in only the last two months.

That's quite interesting. My favorite author has recently suggested that I read the Harry Potter series. I have always thought that I would be bored by them, but I guess I'm going to have to give them a try!

Tell me a little bit about how you decided to make that leap and become an author.

After first discovering Romance Novels and reading over 100 Historical Romance Novels in only one year, I decided the Authors were having entirely too much fun without me and I wanted to join them. So like J. K. Rowling did, I spent a few years completely planning out a series of stand alone books. They take place in Victorian England and are about a Duke's family with several children. Each child has their own Romance book, with a surprise book following after those.

Do any of your characters correspond to your own life?

Yes! Of course as a writer that is part of the fun, but I try to disguise them well enough so as to leave people guessing and not give them away. Never anger an Author, or they may put you

in their books!

Have you allowed many of your friends to read your books? How does that feel?

Not many no. Not all of it either, only parts. And nerve wracking. LOL.
I am ok with critiques & know I need them. I find them helpful and more often than not correct. But sometimes it still smarts a bit to realize you were originally a bit off the mark. As a new writer, I appreciate the help to improve my work though. I'm certain I still have much to learn and always hope to keep improving over time.

Just yesterday I was listening to Freakonomics on NPR, the topic of discussion was critiquing authors. They found that for new authors it was more advantageous to critique them in a primarily positive manner, and then as they become more experienced, they respond better to a more critical manner. We would all be good to remember that advice.

I understand that you are on the lookout for an agent. How is the hunt going?

Although I have pitched my novels to several agents at conferences, who all seemed to like my ideas and requested material, for personal reasons I had decided to hold off for a while and have yet to submit. However I will be re opening and beginning my search with a vengeance this summer. I am a positive thinker and have every expectation, although challenging, that it will go well.

Are you worried about the future of the publishing industry? There have been so many changes and at break neck speeds!

The direction the publishing industry is headed, including self publishing and ease of availability, I believe is to an Authors advantage. My biggest current concern, with the ever growing popularity of ebooks, is for paper books, which I still prefer, and bookstores in general. I am still mourning the loss of Borders and fear for the future of bookstores everywhere. They are one of my favorite places to escape when I need time alone to unwind. It would truly be a great shame if bookstores ever became extinct.

I always like to end with your top books to recommend. If you could choose four, which would they be?

I would be remiss without mentioning one that never goes out of style, the Bible. Full of many fascinating stories it has always been a popular read.

Single handedly reminding me about the joy of reading novels, I feel in gratitude I should include the ever popular Harry Potter Series.

One of the worlds most beloved Authors for over two hundred years now, I must recommend

anything by Jane Austen. I myself am quite partial to Pride & Prejudice.

Nearly all my fans will likely be readers of Miss Austen, and I enjoy far too many other historical authors to mention them all, so I would like to strongly recommend the book that bridged the gap between regular fiction and the romance department for me. In my opinion, one of the best Jane Austen Fan Fiction books available is by Linda Berdoll called "Mr Darcy Takes A Wife". It's magnificent and great fun to read.

Thank you so much again for thinking of me. It has been an honor to share some of myself with you. I hope readers will follow my Author page on facebook and on Twitter at @EvangelinaJo I'm a true #Twitterholic. A stranger is but a future friend. Say hi anytime.

Warmly,
Evangelina
:D

Thank you again Evangelina Joseph! Please leave Evangelina some positive feedback!

For those of you who read last week's interview with Brenda Webb, I am happy to announce the winner of our giveaway! The prize of Brenda's first two novels 'Fitzwilliam Darcy, An Honorable Man' and 'Mr. Darcy's Forbidden Love' goes to...

Patricia Finnegan!!!

Patricia, inbox me (lavenderladysdream@gmail.com) with your contact information so that I can forward it on to Brenda.