

A BSB Interview with Jennifer Harris

by Connie Ward, Bold Strokes Books Publicist/Author Liaison Consultant

April 1, 2008

What made you decide to become a fiction writer?

I never decided. I still think I'm a poet writing really long prose. .

What type of stories do you write? And why?

I wouldn't say I have a "type" of story at all. I get excited about ideas, and then I just obsess about them until I find myself writing them out. I write when something is pushing me forward.

What do your family/friends think about your writing?

My parents were terrified I was going to be this starving poet living in the streets. But, they are very supportive. Same with my good friends and my partner. I don't talk about writing all that much so some friends are still like, huh? You wrote a book?

Where do you get your ideas?

Life. I only know how to write from my own experience.

How do you write; do you plan everything out or just write?

I sort of percolate. I think about my work for really, really long periods of time, and then I write like mad for a short while, and then I edit (rewrite) for a long, long (long) time. Mostly I think writing is sculpture. When I'm writing my partner says I look possessed! She always clears out. Like, OOOOooh, it's that time again! It makes me feel sorta bad.

How much of yourself and the people you know are in your characters?

A lot. I'm just not that imaginative so I draw from the people I know—my own experiences. Then I blur the lines. It's "fiction," though, because it's twisted and not really all that factual. I think mostly the thing about books is that they often represent our shared experiences. There are really only so many "stories" and emotions to go through, and I figure the more honest, the more exact I can be, the more relatable something will be to others.

-continued on page 2-



Order Bold Strokes Books from these Distributors:
CDS.....800 343-4499 Baker & Taylor.....800 775-1100
Ingram.....800 937-8000 Bookazine....800 548-3855
Direct from BellaDistribution 800 533-1973



A BSB Interview with Jennifer Harris

www.BoldStrokesBooks.com

Page 2

What makes *Pink* special to you?

It brought my mother and me closer than I ever could have predicted. Also my partner, Susan, helped me to see what it really was. For a long time I had no idea what I was doing with it. It was super hard to hear her criticisms because I was like so sick of it and just wanted to be done already. But without her it would not be the book it is. It would not even be a book. Really.

Which lesbian authors inspired you the most? Do you have a favorite of this author(s)?

Elizabeth Bishop. Jane Miller. Mary Oliver. Joy Harjo (luv her! especially *She Had Some Horses*—OMG). Achy Obejas. Sarah Waters. Jeanette Winterson. Gertrude Stein (because how can you omit her?), etc. Bishop was huge for me—her sestinas! Sigh. When I first read her work I was like, this is what I want to do!

Do you have any suggestions for new writers?

Just keep going. After writing poetry for a good fifteen+ years I think I have one solid poem. It's a long poem, but it's really one poem nevertheless—oh, and now *Pink*, too. Score! Don't be afraid of failure.

When you're not writing what do you do for fun?

I hang with my partner, Susan, and our daughter, Sophie. She's sixteen months and is really the best thing I ever did. It's pretty easy-breezy. After work today I took Soph to the park and watched her laugh just swinging away. She rocks.



Order Bold Strokes Books from these Distributors:
CDS.....800 343-4499 Baker & Taylor.....800 775-1100
Ingram.....800 937-8000 Bookazine....800 548-3855
Direct from BellaDistribution 800 533-1973

