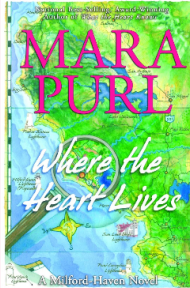


★ Where The Heart Lives by Mara Purl Interview

Published November 9, 2012 | By Rach



This is a double blog tour which means I have interviewed Mara, and Mara has also interviewed me. Check out Mara's blog <http://marapurl.wordpress.com/> to see my answers.

Title: Where The Heart Lives
Author: Mara Purl
Genre: Women's Fiction
Length: 384 pages
Publisher: Bellekeep Books (November 5, 2012)

Synopsis:

Is the heart smarter than the head? Artist Miranda Jones begins to trust her heart enough to escape from her life of privilege and start over in Milford-Haven, the small town of undiscovered beauty on California's Central Coast. She connects with environmentalist Samantha Hugo—a brilliant PhD twenty years her senior who gave up a son years earlier; and with restaurant owner Sally O'Mally who left Arkansas to create her own dream. Each woman wrestles with her own core issues while balancing demanding careers with the attentions of interesting men. None is aware that journalist Christine Christian has just been murdered while investigating a half-built house. Though the book stands alone, it is also Book 1 in the critically acclaimed, popular series, a multi-generational saga. Based on Purl's BBC Radio drama Milford-Haven U.S.A.

Interview:

How many books will be in the Milford-Haven Saga?

You know how popular trilogies are these days? I'm doing something a little different – a pentalogy: five books. And these will be followed by five more. So it'll be ten books all together.

It's been an interesting journey figuring out the structure of the novel series, and it has involved two key elements: the number of books, and the serial adaptation. The story began as a radio drama. The radio drama had 100 episodes... so how many books would that be? After many versions and iterations, I arrived at 10, which now seems easy! The most difficult element of adaptation was that the original radio drama was a soap opera a form that's designed never to end. Yet, of course, a book series would need an actual conclusion.

I wanted the structure to come organically from the story itself, not be superimposed externally. So I thought about where the story begins: with journalist Christine Christian. What are the key questions journalists ask? Who, What, When, Where, Why. So this is where the *pentalogy* came from. And these first five books will answer the *Who, What, When, Where, Why* of the *Heart*. Book one was *What the Heart Knows*; now we're on book two *Where the Heart Lives*. Next year's book is book three, *Why Hearts Keep Secrets*.

One more thing to mention. So that my readers won't have so long to wait between installments, I'm also writing short stories that expand and enhance the saga. Book one had a prequel short story *When Hummers Dream*, which became my first e-book best-seller. Book two has a brand new prequel short story called *When Whales Watch* that your readers can download right now for free!

What inspired you to write your first novel and to continue writing?

"Story" has been my favorite thing since childhood. Each day, starting at about age five, I would write a story; and each evening, I would perform the story for my family. You know the hearth in front of the fireplace? I thought that was a stage, so I thought I was supposed to do a show every night. I thought everyone did! I don't think I've ever gotten over that initial drive to write and share stories.

As a writer, I enjoyed working in many different styles and formats. I was a journalist (*Financial Times* of London, Associated Press, *Rolling Stone*), I wrote screenplays (*The Meridian Factor*, optioned by Fox), essays (published by the *Christian Science Monitor*), non-fiction books (*Act Right* with Erin Gray). And then I wrote the one hundred radio plays for my BBC radio drama *Milford-Haven U.S.A.* In the back of my mind, even while I was writing in these other formats, I always knew I wanted to write novels. I also knew I'd have to live more and have deeper insights to offer before I could write the novels I really wanted to write. So it's a great joy to be writing them now. It feels like a calling, not just a job.

Is Milford-Haven based on a real place?

Yes! It's actually based on two real places, one in California and one in Wales. On California's Central Coast there's a real town called Cambria a beautiful, charming village of artists and craftsmen, entrepreneurs and non-profit founders. I spent a summer there performing a wonderful play and became fascinated by life in a small town. I grew up in a huge city Tokyo so for me, a small town was as foreign and unusual as anything I could imagine. I also felt intuitively that a small-town setting would be perfect as a microcosm for story telling. So I decided to create a fictional town loosely based on Cambria.

Now I had the challenge of choosing a name for my fictional town, and I began with research. Cambria is a Welsh name, so I examined a map of Wales, and discovered that its coastline is, in fact, quite similar to the rugged Central California coastal region. In Wales there's another real town called Milford Haven (no hyphen). It caught my attention particularly when I began rehearsals for another play in which I'd just been cast. I was playing the role of Imogen in Shakespeare's *Cymbeline*. In it, Imogen receives a letter from her beloved that says, "Meet me in Cambria, in Milford Haven." Well, that was it!

The next chapter of this real-life story is just amazing. My radio drama was discovered by a BBC executive producer and became the first American radio serial ever broadcast by the BBC. Of course, we were all "over the moon" with excitement. But one thing I did not foresee was that the real town of Milford Haven would want me to visit there. When I did my London press tour, I also took the train to Wales. When I arrived, imagine my amazement at being greeted by the Town Fathers, who gave me a parade down Main Street, and a reception in Town Hall! It was astonishing, and more heart-warming than I can possibly describe. So, I have a forever connection to the people of Milford Haven, Wales, and am doing research now for a historical novel that will connect the original Milford Haven with my American Milford-Haven. Sometimes life is stranger than fiction!

When you're creating characters do you incorporate traits from people you know?

Yes, sometimes I find a particular trait in a real person just so fascinating that I can't resist incorporating it into a character. I do not, however, "copy" a person wholesale, as it were. I focus on a particular talent or proclivity and imagine how it might work its way into a fictional personality. In general, I'm fascinated by human behavior and choices, and I think a writer of fiction almost has to be, in order to write realistic, compelling characters. So, I might notice a particular behavior and work backward from there, imagining how a person might have arrived at that behavior, thus detecting something about their background and experiences and what makes them "tick."

Search for:

Search

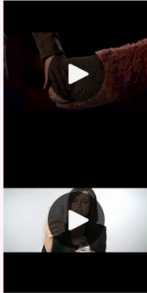
Subscribe By Email

Enter your email address:

Subscribe

Delivered by FeedBurner

Ads



Subscribe Via Google Reader



My Button



. And for those who don't have e-readers, on that same special page there is a free pdf download.

In addition to that special bonus download page, there are other goodies my readers can enjoy on Mara Purl's website.

Visit <http://marapurl.com/books/when-whales-watch/> you will find a free song called "Save the Whales" that you can download, and in addition there are several "behind the scenes" videos throughout the site.

And one more thing -- Mara Purl would love to do a special giveaway to whoever sends the most beautiful postcard to her. She will post it on Pinterest, and will also be happy to send you a copy of the new Hardcover. Mara's postcard page is <http://marapurl.com/share-your-postcard-with-mara/>



Book Star Ratings

- Five Stars -- A Must-Read Favorite!
- Four Stars -- Loved It
- Three Stars -- Liked It
- Two Stars -- It Was Okay
- One Star -- Didn't Like It

Categories

Apps
Baby Products
Back2Best
Blog Hops
Blogger Opportunities
Board Games
Books / E-Books
Clothing
Cookery
Crafts
DVD
Food
Fragrances
Gaming
Garden
Gifts
Giveaways
Guest Posts
Hair & Skincare
Health
Home
Hygiene
Just For Fun
Life
Music
Music Mondays
Outdoor
Pet Care
Poem
Press Release
Promotion
Relationships
Reviews
Safety
Saturday Is Caption Day
Silent Sunday
Software
Sponsored Posts
Sweets
Tips
Toys
Uncategorized

Archives

November 2012
October 2012
September 2012
August 2012
July 2012
June 2012
May 2012
April 2012
March 2012
February 2012
January 2012
December 2011
November 2011
October 2011

Klout

63



Facebook

Stressed Rach

facebook

Stressed Rach

Name:
Stressed Rach
Status:
ohh I have just secured another giveaway :)
Fans:
4417
Promote your Page too

Network Blogs

NetworkedBlogs