Donor Spotlight: Making the Time to Read with Zibby Owens

Zibby Owens, writer and host of the hit podcast “Moms Don’t Have Time to Read Books,” was one of a number of donors who supported the Poets & Writers COVID-19 Relief Fund this spring. We spent some time getting to know her.

Question: The title of your podcast, “Moms Don’t Have Time to Read Books,” pokes fun at the idea that mothers are too busy for literature—but we know how important books are even to the busiest of people! What motivated you to start the podcast?

Answer: Yes! I’m a huge book lover. As a mom of four kids, I have always made time to read, but it can be hard. I’m always the one recommending books to friends, and always want to help my fellow moms save time by getting their literary fix—fast!—when life gets in the way.

Q: What book made you a reader?

A: I remember at age eight finishing Charlotte’s Web long after my bedtime, hiding in the bathroom, and crying. I couldn’t believe a book could make me cry. I was hooked.

Q: With the shift to shelter-at-home and remote work, how has the podcast evolved under “the new normal”?

A: I’ve upped the frequency of the podcast so now I release podcasts daily, seven days a week. I also launched an IGTV series for twelve weeks in which I interviewed up to four authors daily, live, on Instagram. So I got busy!

Q: Do you have any recommendations for readers currently stuck at home?

A: I’d tell readers stuck at home to try to take advantage of the slower pace to read more. I know life is still nuts. With distance learning and four kids and work and housework, it’s a LOT for me. I get it. Grab pockets of time and just read a couple of pages instead of checking Instagram again. If you let reading into the fabric of daily life, it will make the days better, richer, more vibrant. And pick something to read that you love, not that you feel like you “should” read. No one is reading but you.

Q: You generously contributed to the Poets & Writers COVID-19 Relief Fund earlier this spring and I believe also contributed to the Book Industry Charitable Foundation. What motivated you to support these causes?

A: Yes, I’ve been very motivated to help during this time, especially to support people in the literary community—from writers and booksellers to providing books for children and schools that need them. I think books are absolutely fundamental to the human existence and I want to help be the conduit that allows stories to reach more people. The right book can change everything.
FICTION
HENRY ALLEY
Men Touching
Chelsea Station Editions:
March 2020

PETER ALSON
The Only Way to Play It
Arbordale: August 2020

CAREN ANN APPEL
To Kill a Mocking Girl
Crooked Lane Books:
May 2020

LOIS BAER BARR
Lepe de Vega’s Daughter
Red Bird Chapbooks:
September 2019

BONNIE BRAEDELIN
Shakespeare’s Secret
The Ardent Writer Press:
August 2020

MARTY CORREIA
Pigeon Mistlers
My Viral Novel:
May 2020

MICHAEL J. COSTA
Time-Travelling Adrian Laos and the Frozen Pharaoh
Kingdom of Nihau:
January 2020

HELEN DAVIS
The Silent Runner War
Dedalus Books:
November 2019

JUDY DEARLOVE
Play On!
RCWMS Press:
November 2019

CAI EMMONS
Vanishing
Leapfrog Press:
March 2020

MARK FISHMAN
Thirteen Reasons
Guernica Editions:
June 2020

GINNY FITE
Blue Girl on a Night Dream Sea
Black Opal Books:
September 2019

ANN MARTI FRIEDMAN
A Fine Tapestry of Murder
Headline Press:
August 2020

JEFFERY HESS
No Salvation
Down & Out Books:
May 2019

PETER MURPHY
Mean Time
Moonstone Press:
September 2019

MARGARET POWERS MILARDO
Boundaries
Evening Street Press:
November 2019

TONE MILAZZO
The Faith Machine
Running Wild Press:
May 2020

LYNN C. MILLER
The Unmaking: A Novel
University of New Mexico Press:
October 2020

ROBERT PERRON
The Blue House Raid
The Ardent Writer Press:
March 2020

TOM ROBERTS
Lost Souls of Auschwitz
Raven Cliffs Publishing LLC:
March 2020

DIANNE ROMAIN
The Trumpet Lesson: A Novel
She Writes Press:
September 2019

SARI ROSENBLATT
Father Guards the Sleep
University of Iowa Press:
November 2020

LB SLADECK
Four Thieves of Vinegar & Other Short Poems
Alien Buddha Press:
February 2020

LIZA NASH TAYLOR
Eulogy for Runaways—A Novel
Blackstone Publishing:
August 2020

JUDITH TEITELMAN
Guesthouse for Gemini
She Writes Press:
May 2019

STANLEY TRICE
High School Rocket Science
(ForgottenScience) Self-published:
May 2020

LILY TUCK
Healthcliff Redux
Atlantic Monthly Press:
February 2020

PAUL VIGHICH
The Colder Warrior
Pegasus Books:
February 2020

JANICE MARCOLIS
Termination Shocks
University of Massachusetts Press:
April 2019

POETRY
KERRY BRACKETT
Surviving Myself
Guerrilla Ignition Publishing:
April 2020

ROBERT EASTWOOD
Locust/Locust
Main Street Rag Press:
November 2019

JANE EBIBARA
A Reminder of Hunger and Wings
Finishing Line Press:
February 2019

TERRI GLASS
Being Animal
Kelby Books:
September 2020

AMY GORDON
Deep Fairhesit
Prolific Press:
April 2019

LINDA HILLRINGHOUSE
The Things I Didn’t Know It Was to Tell
NYQ Books:
May 2020

ALICE JONES
Vault
Agape Press:
July 2020

PETER KAHN
Little Kings
Nine Arches Press:
June 2020

LEATHA KENDRICK
Lying in the Arms of God
Acents Publishing:
April 2020

CLAIRE KRIUKOWSKY
Living in the Arms of God
Poems of a Sacred Romance
Self-published (via KDP):
March 2020

RONALD LANDS
Final Path
Finishing Line Press:
May 2020

RICHARD LYONS
Heart House
Etruscan Press:
February 2020

TOM MAYO
Notes to the Mental Hospital Timekeeper
Kelby Books:
November 2019

GERALD MCCRATH
Door in the Wall
Spuyten Duyvil Publishing:
January 2020

THE POETS & WRITERS COMPLETE GUIDE TO BEING A WRITER

We are proud to announce the publication of The Poets & Writers Complete Guide to Being A Writer by Kevin Larimer and Mary Gannon. The volume concedes fifty years’ worth of inspiration, advice, and resources into one indispensable resource. Here are a few of the nice things publishing professionals have had to say about our book:

“A book of benefit to well-practiced as well as novice writers, full of useful advice, pointers, and prompts.” — Kirkus Reviews

“This book clears the mist for emerging and established writers and provides a comprehensive answer to every question a writer might ask.” — Nicole Aragi, literary agent, founder of Aragi, Inc.

“Leave it to Poets & Writers to give us the comprehensive guide to the writer’s life. Here is the inspiration to feed your dreams as well as the nuts-and-bolts advice to put food on the table. I wish this excellent resource had been around when I was starting out!” — Tayari Jones, author of An American Marriage

The book’s launch came right at the start of nationwide shelter-at-home orders, so we had to completely rethink our book launch and marketing plan. Still, we are thrilled about this book.

We were fortunate to work with editor Jafie Ferrari-Adler and the entire team at Audr Reader Press, a Simon & Schuster imprint, to bring this book into the world during a time of uncertainty and upheaval. In April, we launched our first ever Instagram Write-a-thon event as a replacement for our in-person events—taking a bit of our own advice to be proactive about marketing, whatever the circumstance. Our followers enjoyed a week of writing prompts, advice, and Action Items from the book. We also partnered with the Center for Fiction to host a virtual panel on writing as an act of generative good. Larimer and Cannon were joined by novelist Nicole Dennis-Benn, publisher and editor Jarma Wilson, literary agent Annie Hwang, and indie publicist Michael Taekens. A host of spectacular folks!

“It was an absolute joy to put this book together,” say Larimer, who serves as editor in chief of Poets & Writers. “Mary and I are so grateful to have had the opportunity to work with our editor, Jofie, and we’re pleased with the reception so far. The work of writers is so incredibly important, perhaps now more than ever, as they use their craft to make sense of an increasingly complex present—and to envision a better future—and I’m certain that this creative resource will be a valuable companion no matter what lies ahead. We look forward to getting it into the hands of many more writers in the coming months!”

Order your copy at pw.org/completeguide.
FICTION

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Men Touching
Chelsea Station Editions: March 2020

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Arbitary Press: August 2020

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Mean Time
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GRACE C. OCASIO
Family Reunion
Broadstone Books: March 2020

FRANK PAINO
Obscura
Orison Books: May 2020

MARTY CORREIA
An Incident That Might Lead To Something
Sparitan Press: March 2020

ELIOT SCHAIN
The Distant Sound
Sixteen Rivers Press: April 2020

JUDITH SMALL
Second Tongue
BrightHouse Books: November 2019

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Poems of a Sacred Romance
Self-published: via KDP

MICHAEL POAGE
Being Animal
Apogee Press: July 2020

JUDY DEARLOWE
My Life as a Sperm
Nine Mile Books: April 2019

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PHONE

JOANNE LEEDEOM-ACKERMAN,
Editor
The Journey of Liu Xiaobo:
Self-published: May 2020

CHRISTINE HEMP
Wild Ride Home: Love, Loss,
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a Family Memoir
Arcade/Skyhorse (Simon & Schuster: Distributor):
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