

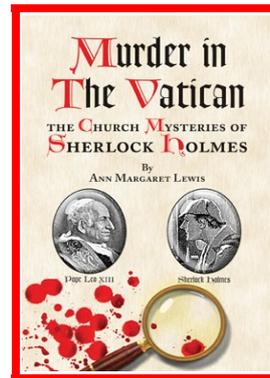
An Interview with Ann Margaret Lewis

April, 2011 Blog Tour Featured Author

at

Time with Tannia

(<http://timewithtannia.tripod.com>)



By:

Tannia E. Ortiz-Lopés

1. You are also a trained soprano. Singing requires discipline, determination, and creativity. Do you consider your training as a singer an asset for your writing skills?

It causes me to think about something else for a while. It challenges me to break out of the shell we writers like to crawl into. We like to hide in our rooms and not come out until our stories are complete. Knowing I should use this extra gift, forces me to step outside my comfort zone sometimes. And that is a good thing. And it gets me used to the idea of taking chances in my writing as well.

2. You chose the visionary Pope Leo XIII and the distinguished Sherlock Holmes as key players for your book, *Murder in the Vatican*. What characteristics of these two world known figures sparked the plot for the book's mysteries?

The plots come from, in some cases, actual events in history, though the roots of the ideas came from the Sherlock Holmes canon. All three cases were mentioned in the original stories, but Watson never told us the stories. However, one cardinal in Leo's curia did die mysteriously during his reign (he was thought to have been poisoned—though he wasn't), and I'm sure that's why Doyle threw it into his story as a throw-away line. However, another man's throw-away is one woman's treasure, in my case.

But to answer your question as to what characteristics: they shared a love of reason, and that is really what propels much of the stories forward. It gives them a point of friendship and respect, and their interplay makes that pretty evident.

3. What challenges you have to overcome while writing this book to keep the voice and style of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, creator of Sherlock Holmes?

I had to concentrate on the language—which words were used in that time and which were not? Also tempo, tone, pacing—I really had to dig into how Doyle constructing phrases and sentences. It was the kind of work I hadn't done before, and it was definitely a challenge.

4. Which one of your stories was the hardest to write and why?

The last one—"The Second Coptic Patriarch." I was stuck in the middle of that story for quite a while. Then one day I read a Raymond Chandler quote: "When in doubt, have a man come through the door with a gun in his hand." And suddenly, I knew what I had to do. I had someone run through the door with a gun and the story just went where it needed to go. Thank God for Raymond Chandler!

5. Did you have to ask permission to the Sir Arthur Conan Doyle Literary Estate to pursue the publication of your book? Please share with our readers your experience with them.

I didn't deal with the Doyle estate, the publisher did. Apparently they have some understanding with them as they publish other Holmes material. Though I did write for permission to use Father Brown as a cameo, and the executors of the Chesterton estate were very generous. As long as I gave Mr. Chesterton proper credit for the characters, I could give him a cameo, which I did.

6. The illustrations in your book are fantastic. How and where did you meet Mr. Rikki Niehaus?

Rikki is a *Mrs.*, actually – she's a she (she might want Ms. rather than Mrs, I'm not sure—regardless, she is married.) I blush when I make the admission that I did not know that for a while. She's quite a private person. But I met her through a Sherlock Holmes bulletin board. She did the designs for the web site, and her drawings were just so striking I asked her if she did contract work, and she said yes. The rest is history. □

7. Who would most likely be interested on buying your book?

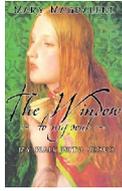
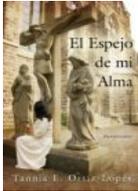
People who like Sherlock Holmes, a good mystery, a person of faith might enjoy it, or someone who just wants something fun.

8. Where can our readers purchase your book? How about a signed copy?

The book can be purchased through the publisher at www.wessexpress.com, or the distributor at www.ignatius.com. Amazon has it listed, but there appears to be issues with getting it officially available. For signed copies – they should contact me through my web site <http://holmeschurchmysteries.com> and we'll figure out the best way to get their books signed.

9. What is your goal by the end of this blog tour?

To make some new friends.



Tannia E. Ortiz-Lopés, author of *The Window To My Soul; My Walk With Jesus* (2004 Tate Publishing;). *El Espejo de mi Alma* (2011 Pleasant Word) .
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READERS' COMMENTS:

Date Received: April 4, 2011 1:33 PM EST

Name: Karina Fabian

Email Address:(optional)

Web site URL:(optional) www.fabianspace.com

Where did you hear about this interview?

Comments: Thanks, Tannia, for hosting Ann on her book tour. For those wanting to know more about her book, please check out her schedule at <http://www.fabianspace.blogspot.com/>

Date Received: April 4, 2011 3:35 PM EST

Name: Ann Lewis

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Where did you hear about this interview? Tannia

Comments: Thanks for having me on your blog, Tannia. You've been a gracious host! If anyone has questions about the book, please feel free to email me at annlewis (at) joesystems.com. Blessings! --Ann Lewis