

An Interview with Leanne Dyck

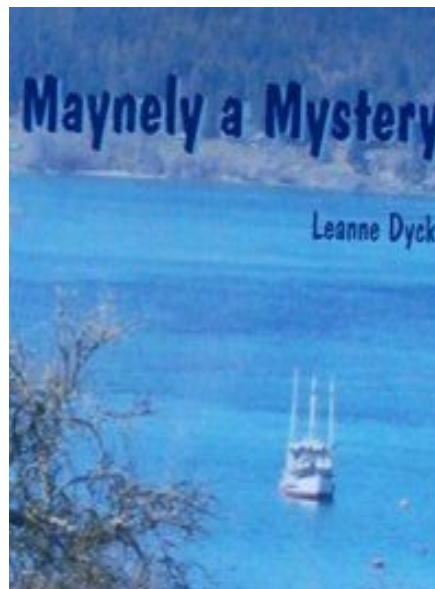
January 2010 Featured Author
at

Time with Tannia

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

By:

Tannia E. Ortiz-Lopés



1. Tell us about yourself.

I was born and raised in Eriksdale, Manitoba. Eriksdale is a rural community between Lake Manitoba and Lake Winnipeg. My grandfather built and my father was born in my childhood home. The house is still in my family. Currently my niece owns it.

When I was twenty, I travelled across Canada as a member of the Katimavik youth group. Katimavik is a government-run youth program for volunteers seventeen to twenty-one years of age. Members live communally as they work in three culturally diverse communities. Each member receives a dollar a day and at the successful conclusion of the nine-month program earns an honorarium. Even though, at times the program was emotionally, physically and mentally tasking on me I look back on this time with fond memories. I lived and worked in Saint Anthony, Newfoundland; Bradford, Ontario; and Village de Huron, Quebec.

When I returned home to Manitoba, I began studying at the University of Winnipeg. I graduated with a Child Care Worker diploma. I devoted over a decade of my life working with children in day care settings.

Shortly after marrying, my husband and I moved to urban British Columbia. I continued to work in day cares while I volunteered and began my social worker training.

When my mother began to lose her fight against cancer, I returned to Manitoba for a month and a half to be by her side. The death of my mother sent me into depression. I realized I could no longer live in urban BC nor work in the social services.

Thankfully my husband and I found Mayne Island. The island is very special to me. It has provided me with a place to heal, to grow and to create.

2. You have published two knitting books, *Yarn Therapy – An Introduction to Knitting* (e-book) and *Novelty Yarn* (audio book). What makes these two books unique in content and format in comparison with other knitting books in the market? Where can our readers purchase them?

"Novelty Yarns contains a collection of small, tasty morsels that will continue to surprise you right up until the last bite.... Ranging from childhood memories about 4-H knitting and lessons from Grandma to night dreams about wild women knitting in the forest, each segment evokes a different mood. Many of the stories made me laugh out loud, while others made me pause...to meditate for a few minutes. The stories are separated by brief interludes of acoustic guitar music.... The guitar intervals are just long enough to let your mind rest between the stories. The sensation is like cleansing your palette after sampling each vintage at a wine tasting. The total experience was delicious" Quote from a review by Donna Druchunas author of *Ethnic Knitting Discovery*

Novelty Yarn is available from www.oknitting.com and, in the summer, from ArtCraft a gallery on Salt Spring Island, British Columbia.

Yarn Therapy holds the novice knitter's hand as it gently introduces each concept of the craft. It covers topics that other learn-to-knit books don't such as how to weave in ends and how to connect with other knitters.

It has been my experience that first projects are either too challenging or too boring. I carefully designed the interesting projects offered in *Yarn Therapy* to appeal to the new knitter at their current skill level.

Yarn Therapy is available from www.oknitting.com

3. In addition to your two knitting books, you have also published articles in magazines. What was the topic of your articles? How does these other markets successes influenced your decision to publish a novel?

My writing has appeared in local newspapers, in knitting magazines, and in a trade magazine for early childhood educators. The articles that appeared in the early childhood educators trade magazine was about reading to children.

The inspiration for an article published in 2008 came from my first trip outside North America. You see, over one hundred and fifty years ago my maternal icelandic ancestors were forced to -- due to incimate weather conditions -- leave their homeland. On September 2007 I traveled to Iceland. I found warm hospitality and a rich culture. I wrote of this trip for the Canadian knitting magazine *Knit Together* You can read *Knitting in Iceland* by logging on to <http://www.authorsden.com/visit/viewarticle.asp?id=40142>

4. Your personal website, www.oknitting.com is simple, informative, and have some nice samples of your knitting patterns and all your books, too. Share with us the origin of the Olavia's hand knitting patterns.

In 1999, when I moved to Mayne Island, I established and ran a craft supply store. Olavia's knitting patterns was born in this store. As an introvert, I found daily interaction with the public a challenge. To help me cope with this stress, I knit. I received many requests for the patterns for the items I knit from the knitters who frequented my store. In response to these requests, I had to explain that they were my own designs. My customers encouraged me to begin my career as a knitwear designer. After two years, for financial reasons, I was forced to close my store. I am currently in my seventh year as a knitwear designer. I have sold patterns to knitters from Australia, Europe, Asia and North America.

5. Knitting and writing require discipline, creativity, and perseverance. Do you considered your knitting skills a plus during the writing of your debut novel, *Maynely a Mystery*? What do a unique knit pattern and a well developed mystery plot have in common?

While writing *Maynely A Mystery* I found that knitting kept my hands busy which allowed my imagination to soar.

A knitting pattern and the plot of a novel are similar in structure. Both start with a firm foundation. In a pattern knitters are lead by well-written instructions from one step to another until they have successful completed the project. This is much like a mystery novel where readers are lead from one clue to another until they solve the mystery.

6. Is *Maynely a Mystery* based on an old legend or folktales from Mayne Island? Or is it only the produce of your imagination? Share with our readers the background story of the book and where can they purchase a copy of it.

A quote from the preface: "*Some time ago, I read More Tales from the Outer Gulf Islands: An Anthology of Memories and Anecdotes. Included in the anthology was a piece by Marie Elliot called "The Japanese of Mayne Island." This article seeded my imagination. My muse fed on the fruit produced by this seed and I began to write Maynely A Mystery.*"

As I wrote, I studied Mayne Island's past using especially Marie Elliot's book *Mayne Island & The Outer Gulf Islands: A History*. I would like to thank Marie Elliot for educating and inspiring me.

Maynely A Mystery is available from five BC bookstores and three bookstores in Winnipeg, Manitoba. On Mayne Island *Maynely A Mystery* is available from Miners Bay Books. On Saturna Island from Boot Cove Books. On Salt Spring Island from Volume II bookstore, Salt Spring Books and Sabine's. In Winnipeg, Manitoba *Maynely a Mystery* is available from Prairie Sky Books and from McNally Robinson (Grant Park and Polo Park shopping centres). On the web *Maynely A Mystery* is available from www.maynelyamystery.blogspot.com

7. Having a good platform and loyal readers is the dream of all authors and writers. You are present in blogspot.com, [youtube](http://youtube.com), [authorsden](http://authorsden.com), and web.me.com What can your visitors expect by visiting each one of these sites?

www.maynelyamystery.blogspot.com informs visitors of *Maynely a Mystery* events, where to purchase the book, author events, and author interviews. Please log on you'll discover even more information that I failed to list.

www.youtube.com/maynelyamystery features a book reading by the author.

www.authorsden.com/leannedyck features writing by author Leanne Dyck including the first chapter of *Maynely a Mystery*

8. Who is your favorite mystery author? What aspects of that author's work inspired you to become a mystery writer?

The list of authors I enjoy reading is diverse and ever growing. It includes mystery authors such as P.D. James, Agatha Christie, Terry Griggs (*Thought You Were Dead*) and John Deverell (*Kill All the Judges*). My reading is not limited by genre. I enjoy literary fiction as well as genre fiction – from the comically zany *Skinny Legs and All* by Tom Robbins to the seriously dark *Ethan Frome* by Edith Wharton. I enjoy reading books that welcoming me into a world that consumes me. Though these authors have shaped and continue to shape my writing, my writing voice is uniquely my own.

I was intrigued by the cozy mystery genre ability to bring readers to a setting. By reading *Maynely A Mystery*, readers can travel with me to the island I love from the comfort of their favourite reading chair.

9. I noticed all your books were self-published as e-book and paperback using lulu.com. Why did you choose to self-publish using lulu.com instead of going through a traditional publishers? Would you recommend this provider to other authors? What are some of the advantages or disadvantages of self-publishing?

Printorium Bookworks in Victoria, BC prints the *Maynely A Mystery* paperback. I choose to self-publish for a number of reasons. These days publishing houses are requiring authors to take even more of an active role in the publishing and marketing of their novels. I wanted to educate myself in hopes of working successfully with a publishing house in the future.

As well, as I wrote *Maynely A Mystery* I found the image of my book becoming more and more clear. I knew what the cover would look like, I knew what font I would use, I knew how I would market it. I wanted to see if I could actually succeed in making my dream a reality.

The advantage of self-publishing is that the book is your baby. All the choices are yours.

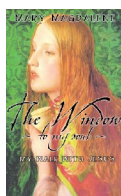
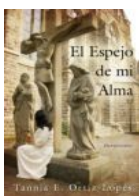
The disadvantage of self-publishing is that the book is your baby. You must fund the project yourself. You are the only one marketing it. It would be so much nicer if I wasn't completely alone during the marketing process.

10. Are you working on new projects?

Currently I am working on a number of projects. To highlight a few, I am working on a romance novella, a mystery and a novel for young adult readers. My pen seldom rests.

11. A word of advice to new writers.

Fall in love with writing. Write daily. Read, read, read – at least an hour a day.



Tannia E. Ortiz-Lopés, author of *The Window To My Soul; My Walk With Jesus* (2004 Tate Publishing;). *El Espejo de mi Alma* (2010 Pleasant Word) .

Author's websites: timewithtannia.tripod.com, www.shoutlife.com/tanniaortizlopes, and www.myspace.com/tanniaortizlopes The author also has a blog at www.amazon.com

READERS' COMMENTS:

Date Received: December 31, 2009

Name: Leanne

Email Address:(optional) leanne@oknitting.com

Web site URL:(optional) <http://www.maynelyamystery.blogspot.com/>

Where did you hear about this interview?

Comments: Thank you, Tannia, it was a pleasure being interviewed by you. Leanne

Date Received: Celia

Name:

Email Address:(optional)

Web site URL:(optional) <http://www.devonshirebabe.com/>

Where did you hear about this interview? From Tannia

Comments: Lovely interview. Leanne, your enthusiasm is inspiring and your writing is as unique as your knitwear designs.

Date Received: January 31, 2010

Name: Tannia E. Ortiz-Lopés

Email Address:(optional)

Web site URL:(optional) <http://timewithtannia.tripod.com/>

Where did you hear about this interview?

Comments: Thanks Leanne for accepting my invitation to be a featured author at Time with Tannia.