

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE-United States, 2021-May-04— /Press Release 101/-
ToStories/-Multi-genre fiction author Patricia M. Muhammad discusses her third
historical romance novel, *Ardor's Prestige*.

1. How many books have you written and which is your favorite? I have written 20 books thus far. I have more than one favourite: *Ascending Darkness*, *Beyond the Moonlight and the Flame*, *the Bridge Between* (those are from the *Silhouette Lost* series), *Love Captured* and *The Speakeasy Murders*.
2. Which of the characters in *Ardor's Prestige* do you relate to the most and why? I would say the main characters, Anastasia and Leandro. Both found each other by circumstance. Each endeavoured to protect their relationship despite the envy and machinations of others. This is actually a recurring theme in my historical romance novels.
3. What is one of your favorite excerpts from *Ardor's Prestige* and why? When her cavalier servente is seized in her House by royal guards:

Duchessa Anastasia's view wandered beyond the scene set before her towards a fresco near the entrance of the main study. There she walked into what now seemed to be a mural for Giorgio's inevitable death. Her father had the replicate commissioned to a renowned painter whose style and attention to color, depth, and angle was impeccable. It was the *Personification of Justice* as originally rendered by Louis Dorigny. The maiden saw herself climbing into the embedded portrait, asking the blindfolded woman to hear her; to listen to even the overwhelmed Giorgio whose silence she interpreted as a surrender due to weakness in the midst of authority. There was a small figure to her right and below. He was unable to hide under the woman's flowing white robe. Had any spectator been ignorant of the figure, they would have assumed that she was his guardian angel. This woman was far from this, an embodiment of the unknown which separated good and evil, the righteous from the wicked. Nor had the boy shield himself behind the rock of which they both sat upon. The artistry was refined and a remarkable depiction of a young lad in his natural state. This too reminded her of her childhood companion, the one boy whose innocence no one would ever doubt—until now. 'Please help him, save Giorgio from himself,' she thought. The duchessa saw the sword hovering above the male child's head. She accepted that it was either to defend the accused of tender age or to sever his head from his body in the pursuit of justice. In this child she witnessed Giorgio's face, confused, seeking someone, any benevolence to whisk him away from an unknown future; wondering whether he could surmount the evidence the guards had presented before her. But justice had failed to see. There were only two options for the signora to consider; either the king's judgment would be administered either in his favor or against him. This is what she saw in the lad, one who hoped for just rulership but did not expect much more than a despotic city-state. His was a surrender of his life to the hands of others he had never known. This is what she now saw, Giorgio in the grasp of the two royal guards.

Despite her annoyance with the servant's unrequited fondness for her, the scene demonstrates her humanity. It is this tenderness that Leandro, the courtier whom she weds, would come to appreciate. I also enjoy it as a nod to the curation (though a replica) of art that 18th century Europe appreciated.

4. How did you come up with the title for your book? In most historical romance novels, including my own, the issue of class, humanity, and affection are recurring themes. I wanted to use a term that displays love, that is the romance that would be solidified by Duchessa Anastasia and "Duca" Leandro, while also reflecting their social standing in their city-state and the king's court. However, in the end is not their wealth or status that gives them the true high standing, it is their genuine affection for one another that hold many who witness it in awe.
5. What was your hardest scene to write, and why? One of the most difficult scenes to write was the interaction between Leandro and his father, whom we learn is actually king. It is not solely the male voice to try to put in words, but it was also the reality that the maiden would bear the burden of even perceived indiscretion during the 18th century. I do not think much has changed. Leandro is relentless in defending her to his father, servants or anyone else who dared question him concerning his relationship with Anastasia. His endeavour to wed her is joyfully accomplished and in a sense puts most others to shame.
6. What draws you to historical fiction? That an author can frame the issue of love, race, class, or envy as recorded in history and not be confined by the current bounds of social expectations to overlook these uncomfortable facts that are still relevant in today's society.
7. What do the words "writer's block" mean to you? Not being able to write. To be stumped by external variables such as distracting noise, and internal ones, such as doubt.
8. Do you participate in writing challenges on social media? Do you recommend any? No, never had. It seems to help some people. I have never tried it so I cannot recommend any.
9. Has writing and publishing a book changed the way you see yourself? Yes. I never thought I would have the title of artist, but here I am, a fiction author.
10. What are common traps for new authors? I think one common trap for new authors is thinking that you know the entire story before you write it. I have heard of some people outlining and drafting charts before they even begin to write their book. I can say that writing the Silhouette Lost series I have had multiple experiences. There were one or two of the books where I wrote the last chapter first and I had to somehow write the book to lead into that last section because I knew how I wanted it to end. Some think it is easy to write a series because one book builds atop of the other, but despite my attempt to have the storylines flow, I created more creatures, introduced additional characters or made ancillary ones have a more pertinent role. I find it difficult to allow my creativity to just flow, but sometimes when you do, you surprise yourself with what you are able to write.
11. What's your favorite writing snack or drink? Flavoured lattes.
12. What advice would you give to a writer working on their first book? To not place so many expectations on yourself at first as to how the story sounds. If you are goal-oriented then you may want to set your standard at the beginning, like how many pages or word count you expect to achieve with your first book. This way, you have something to motivate you to continue writing until you meet the standard that you have set for yourself.

Ardor's Prestige is available for purchase as an ebook from these online retailers:

Amazon ASIN: B08KB34F57
Barnes & Noble: 2940164274597
Smashwords: 9781005676650
Tolino Media: 9783752117707
Thalia EAN: 9783752117707
Kobo ISBN: 1230004259497
Google Play: GGKEY:TU2BD6X8HEW
DriveThru Fiction: N/A
Apple Books: N/A
Lulu: N/A

About the Author: Patricia M. Muhammad is a multi-genre fiction author who often incorporates interracial relationships and multi-racial characters as a part of her storylines. She has written 20 novels. Patricia is currently based in the United States.

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