



The 7 Question Interview with Maggie Stiefvater

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Maggie Stiefvater is an avid reader, an award-winning colored pencil artist, and plays several musical instruments, including the Celtic harp, the piano, and the bagpipes. Some of her novels are:

- Shiver
- Linger
- Lament
- Ballad

Her official website can be accessed here: <http://www.maggiestiefvater.com>

The WritingRaw.com 7 Question Interview

Please let us know who you are and how we might know you:

I'm Maggie Stiefvater, author of paranormal novels for young adults. My debut, LAMENT, came out last October and got three starred reviews, and my next novel, SHIVER, is coming out August 1. I have a blog on Livejournal that I update far more than is wise: <http://m-stiefvater.livejournal.com>, and I'm also on Facebook and Twitter.

Any news you would like to share concerning upcoming projects:

I'm really excited about my August release, SHIVER. It's a bittersweet love story about Grace, a girl who has always loved the wolves that live in the woods behind her house, and Sam, a boy who must become a wolf each winter. He gets fewer months as a human each year, so when they fall in love, the race is on. This book has taken off so much more than I expected -- before it has even come out, the rights have been sold in 17 territories, it's been chosen as a Borders Original Voices pick for August and it's a Junior Library Guild selection. And to think that when I wrote it, all I could think was "why am I writing about werewolves? Werewolves won't sell."



Thoughts concerning the current state of the literary world:

It's exciting and terrifying. Publishing is in a wild state of flux as the economy twists and turns -- everything that I took as normal through ten years of submitting manuscripts and following the publishing world is slowly getting turned on its head as publishers look for ways to make the business more viable in an increasingly digital world. I would say I wouldn't be happy to be submitting my first manuscript right now, but one of my two critique partners just sold her first novel to a great house. Great books are still selling -- it's just writing a great book, that, as always, is the hard part.

But for readers, it's fantastic. I love young adult fiction, and the section has exploded in the past few years. People are just starting to figure out that a lot of great books are shelved in YA, thanks in large part to Harry Potter, who made middle grade cool, and TWILIGHT, that made YA sexy.

Who is your favorite author and why?

For her entire body of work, I'd go with Diana Wynne Jones. While there are other authors who have books that I truly, truly love, like Melina Marchetta and Audrey Niffenegger, Diana Wynne Jones sort of made me the reader that I am today. I remember reading DOGSBODY six times back to back as a kid. And falling into her FIRE AND HEMLOCK and EIGHT DAYS OF LUKE and . . . just so many books that sort of form the shape of my childhood.

Anyway, Diane Wynne Jones does an amazing job of making her books funny and serious. I never forgot as a reader how the funny bits made the bad bits seem so much worse and the bad bits made the funnier so much funnier. It's something I try to do as a writer now.

Have you written a book you love that you have not been able to publish?

Hmmm. I think most everything publishable that I've written is either published or under contract -- my debut, LAMENT, was really the first truly professional manuscript that I turned out after a lifetime of practice novels. I do have bits of ideas that I love in those unpublished manuscripts, though, and while I'd never rewrite them, I feel quite confident in saying I am going to cannibalize those novels for years to come.

It's fun in a terrible way to go back and look at my old manuscripts (because they are really quite bad -- think a never-been-kissed sixteen year old trying her hand at a sex scene) and see how I've been playing with some of the same concepts and themes all along.



Do you have anything specific that you want to say to your readers?

Um. Thanks for not shutting up. Really, word of mouth has been absolutely fantastic and I can't say enough grateful things for everyone who's loved one of my novels and then told someone else about it.

How do you feel about what WritingRaw.com and other literary sharing sites are attempting to do for new writers?

I think it's great. When I first started writing, my resources were basically WRITER'S MARKET and tattered copies of Writer's Digest magazines. It was easy to claim ignorance as an excuse. And equally easy to get a lovely form rejection for my efforts. But now the world wide web stretches out before newbies, a veritable ocean of information. Sites like this are new writers' weapons, allowing them to go out into the battle that is getting published with some vestige of armor. So yeah, I think they're wonderful. It means new writers can get judged on the basis of their writing and not on a silly mistake like poorly directed submissions or badly written queries or trying to sell an unsellable project.

WritingRaw.com would like to thank Maggie Stiefvater for taking the time out of her busy schedule for this interview.