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Publishing Your Own Book of Poetry

By Peggy Eldridge-Love

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Many established poets published themselves initially, some of them do so continually. In the literary arena that currently exists this is very acceptable and respected. But before you consider self-publishing consider the following.

Does your poetry hold universal appeal?

You can determine whether or not your poetry holds universal appeal by joining a few well-established poetry forums that offer critiquing from a variety of other poets and poetry readers. Search around first. Explore the forum for the quality of work that is being exchanged there and the quality of feedback that is being offered. Bring your hard hat and leave your sensitivity checked at the door. You want legitimate critiquing, not something to make you feel good. You want to ensure that your poetry meets and exceeds the norm. If it does not you may want to continue to write poetry for your own enjoyment, but not labor with the issue of publication.

Is your poetry extremely well received by your poetic peers?

Within the forums where you have been developing your craft you are receiving extremely good reviews. If this is the case, and the reviews are not just from the friends you have established within the forum, but due to the quality of your work (you will honestly know the difference), start to set aside the ones that have been best received. You might want to take them though even deeper critiques in more sophisticated poetry workshops, but bring them to the highest level you can. If they continue to receive good feedback you will almost certainly want to include them in your book ultimately, but you will now want to submit them to publications.

Submit to Publications.

Submit your work to reputable Literary and Poetry eZines and print publications. There are hundreds of eZines online that you can submit to. Do a little research. Look at what they are publishing and if you feel they might be receptive to your work submit to them. The same with print publications. When you

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receive notification that your poem(s) has been accepted this will be the first bona fide signal you get that publication of your first volume of poetry is a good idea.

Publishing!

If you are not trying to reach the mass publishing marketplace, but want mostly to have a printed collection of your poetry to offer to a more limited audience, consider having a small collection of your poetry printed in Chapbook form. Chapbooks are great to sell after poetry readings because you can usually price them very reasonably, and great as gifts, introductions to you as a poet in other literary circumstances, and just overall rewarding to your literary pursuits.

If you want to publish a book of poetry you should try to have a collection of 70 or more. For a book to

find its way onto the bookstore shelf it will need to be perfect bound, have a thick enough spine that all of its title, author and publisher information is visible on it, and the back must have ISBN information and pricing. My first book of poetry, *You Beckon*, is 88 pages and meets all of that criteria. www.barnesandnoble.com

There is a wonderful free publication entitled *Publishing Basics: A Guide for the Small Press and Independent Self-Publisher* by Robert Bowie Johnson, Jr. It is available from RJ Communications and can be requested online from <http://www.BooksJustBooks.com>. It will take you step-by-step through everything you'll need to know to get your book from your head to the shelf!

It can be done! I did it following the information outlined above. I chose to publish a book rather than a chapbook. My book, *You Beckon*, has received numerous honors including the Best Poetry Book for 2003 from Mahogany Book Club (Albany, New York) and spent over six months (in 2004) as the most requested result under Poetry Inspirational on Amazon.com. It has not been easy and truthfully, it has not been exceptionally profitable, but it has been personally rewarding. You can do it too. Start now!

I hope this has been helpful and encouraging!

Peggy Eldridge-Love

Author

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Peggy Eldridge-Love is an award-winning poet, screenwriter, a playwright and novelist. She is also the creator/publisher of Nudgies® Greeting Cards.

Give a Gift of Poetry this year to your Valentine

By Gary R. Hess

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Valentines day is a special holiday for couples in all stages of their relationship. Married, engaged or just a dating, valentines day is the time for you.

We all know what comes along with Valentines, chocolate and flowers right? Well, it's time for a change. This year give your loved one the gift of poetry. Poetry you ask? Yes.

Poetry lets you show your true emotions and lets your partner feel they are truly special. The poem doesn't have to be something you get from a well known poet and you don't have to go out and buy the latest *Poetry for Dummies*.

Poetry is about arousing senses and showing emotion. If you do that, you have a great poem.

However, if you feel you don't have what it takes to write or you are just plain lazy, there are many great places you can buy poetry, both customized and non.

One such place is

. They have a nice selection of poetry with great customer service. I

highly recommend them.

Valentines day is still a few days away, so you still have time to get your poetry ready for your loved ones. Give them a great gift this year, the gift of poetry!

Gary is a writer for

.

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