

Each month we will focus on an inspiring author based in or writing about Wales! You'll have an introduction to their latest book, what inspires them to write, and any advice they have for young writers!

Get to know

Georgia Carys Williams



Georgia Carys Williams lives in Swansea. Her short story collection *Second-hand Rain* was shortlisted for the Sabotage Short Story Award and longlisted for the Edge Hill Prize and the Frank O'Connor International Prize. She has a doctorate in creative writing from Swansea University. *Unspeakable Beauty* is her debut novel, publishing with Parthian 18th March.

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Unspeakable Beauty

Georgia
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Summary:

Growing up in a lonely house on the edge of a wild common, Violet Hart is a quiet and sheltered only child who has always dreamt of becoming something extraordinary: a ballet icon as famous as Margot Fonteyn.

Guarding her dream closely after suffering catastrophic loss, Violet falls further into quietness, learning to speak only with her feet as she pursues a path to a career in dance. On the cusp of adulthood, she finally starts to find her voice.

But when a secret, all-consuming affair

with her older lover Theo threatens to send her world into a tailspin, will Violet find herself? Or will she succumb to the silence she knows so well?

This beautiful, poetic debut novel warns of the dangers of being a quiet person in a loud world and letting magnetic strangers pull your strings. Set on the Welsh coast, *Unspeakable Beauty* is an unsettling coming-of-age tale about the importance of learning how to take the lead and be yourself, of finding hope in the shadows, of letting your dreams bloom.

When did you become aware of wanting to write, did any particular factors play a part?

I've always loved being around words. Reading, first, of course. Then, from around five years old, I found myself writing short stories in exercise books at home. I remember I was still using my finger to space out the words. It wasn't something I thought about an awful lot, it was just fun to be creative and construct a little narrative where nobody could stop me. How could anything about imagination be right or wrong? It was freeing. I did this every now and then over the years, never taking the idea of becoming a 'writer' very seriously because as a small child, I assumed that being an author was something only famous people did, as though they were born that way. Aged fourteen and full of angst, I found myself writing poetry. Emotions I was finding that bit too intense needed somewhere to go!

What influences and memories stand out from your childhood?

I attended dance lessons from the age of three until I was nearly fifteen,

starting with ballet, so it was a fitting influence for the framework of my novel, *Unspeakable Beauty*, which is centred around ballet as a form of expression. Dance – as a craft – has many similarities to writing. It taught me a lot about discipline and dedication. You learn to become comfortable with a kind of discomfort that you know will be worth it in the long run. That discomfort reminds me of the feeling I have while editing the first draft of a manuscript, which may have only been crudely choreographed; the pain of removing those sentences, paragraphs and chapters, after you so thoroughly enjoyed dancing across the pages. Reading is the initial dance, that completely improvised fun – without all the overthinking. Since being an adult, one of the things I most miss is being able to read for an infinite number of hours in one stretch, able to just lose myself with no responsibilities!

Give us a quote that is at the heart of your life...

'It is never too late to be what you might have been.' – George Eliot

... more Q&As
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