



A profile of the writer: Tatiana Cavola

Tatiana Cavola held a workshop about writing for the participants of C4 activity in Erasmus+ project OUTvialCT in Italy, Cerveteri.



Name: Tatiana Cavola

Born: 06/05/1988

Lives in: I live in Cerveteri, near Rome

5. How many books she has written: I published one novel so far, but I'm presently writing other two.



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Questions for a writer:

1. What was your favourite fairy-tale when you were a young child?

My favourite fairy-tale has always been “Beauty and the Beast”. I find it extremely stimulating for a young girl: the story of a strong, intelligent, independent young woman with a passion for books and culture who doesn’t want to homologate to the close mentality of her fellow-citizens and is willing to do anything to save a member of her family. I also adore the moral of the story: what a person really is inside doesn’t necessarily match his/her exterior aspect, so you should always focus more on the substance than on the appearance. The fact that at the end she is rewarded with finding the love of a charming prince is the top of the cake.

2. What book did you like when you were young?

There were many as I’ve always read a lot. I started when I was only four and I’ve never stopped since then. My favourite book was (and still is) “The firebrand” by Marion Zimmer Bradley. It’s the story of the war of Troy from Cassandra’s point of view, with some Fantasy elements. It’s a wonderful mix of history, mythology, Fantasy and feminism, as she’s a very strong and intelligent protagonist.

3. When did you start writing your own stories?

As far as I remember, I’ve always like writing. When I was at Primary School, I used to write short stories for my Italian teacher, whenever she assigned us a test. I tried to write my first novel when I was 13, but it came to nothing in the end...I quit at Chapter 5! I was 31 when I finally published my first novel.

4. What is the name of your first book, when was it published and what is it about?

The Italian title is “Penelopea. La regina di Itaca”, but it could be translated as “Penelopey. The Ithaca Queen”. It’s the story of Ulysses and Penelope seen from her perspective even before the marriage. The aim was to make her seem much more modern and realistic than she is in the Odissey, deleting all the stereotypes. The result is a real woman, shown in her complexity, the good and bad, strength and weakness. She’s also really ironic, so she will destroy much of what we think to know about her with a smile. Just a hint: Ulysses is not her first love!

5. What kinds of books do you like reading?

I’m passionate about Fantasy novels. I am a living encyclopedia about this genre, I also give lectures to my students about that to show that it’s one of the most important genres in contemporary literature. My favourite author is Marion Zimmer Bradley: she wrote more than 60 books and I’m proud to say that I have them all! Even some that were never published in my country, but only in the USA in the 1960s and are really difficult to find.

I also like historical novels, especially those about the Celtic period, the Middle Age or the Renaissance. I really like Philippa Gregory or Morgan Llewellyn’s books.

6. Do you prefer writing for children or for adults?

I think my stories can be read from a teen age on. When I started writing my first novel, I wanted to prove something to my high-school students who thought that the Omeric poems were boring and far from their lives, so I tried to find a style that could catch the eye even of a younger reader without being childish or vain. So far, I got feedback of every kind of reader from 13-year-old boys to 70-year-old women, so I probably got the result I wanted.

